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ART. I. *The Hireling Priest.*

"Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his priest."
Judges xviii. 4.

THE whole book of Judges goes to illustrate what we find in the second chapter—that when Joshua and all that generation were dead, there arose another generation that knew not the Lord, nor yet the works that he had done for Israel. And they forsook the Lord, and provoked him to anger; and he forsook them; though not utterly, but raised up saviours for them, from time to time, who saved them from their enemies. This last remark is first illustrated, by the sketch that is given us through the first sixteen chapters, of the different Judges that appeared—the occasion of their being raised up and the deliverance effected by them; which brings down their history to the days of Samuel. The remaining five chapters, however, are not a continuation in the order of time, but a returning to take up the other part of the description and show that the generation spoken of were indeed ignorant of God. The time, therefore, of all the events recorded in these chapters, we are to consider to have been the very first age after Joshua.

The first proof of the ungodliness of the generation is taken from the state of family religion; (chap. xvii. 1—7,) which presents us a most deplorable picture indeed. The parent, with care and expense, leading her son into idolatry; uttering a curse, or a blessing, with equal readiness and irreverence, &c. The son, improving on the lesson, had a house of gods, ephod and teraphim, and that the apostacy might continue to after generations, he engages his son also in it with him; "he consecrated one of his sons and he became his priest." But as this particular is not so directly our object, we shall not dwell upon it.

The next specimen is taken from the state of the ministry; and this priest is brought forward; and that, no doubt, because he was a very fair instance of the great majority in his day. The first question we would naturally ask of him would be that asked by Micah, "Whence comest thou?" He answers, "I am a Levite of Bethlehem-Judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a place." According to the divine appointment the Priests and Levites had cities and suburbs in all the tribes of Israel; besides tithes and gifts and various items of income, which amounted to an abundant and honorable support. Moreover their families were so distributed over the country that people might every where conveniently attend on them for instruction; and there was no need of

any one travelling any distance for that purpose. But this Levite appears either totally ignorant, or, more probably, regardless of that arrangement; rambling wherever his inclination directed, one time at Bethlehem-Judah, (which was no city of Priests or Levites;) and from verse 3 of this chap., it seems he was known to the men of Dan, having probably been in their tribe some time; now we find him in mount Ephraim and going, he cared not whither if only he could find a place to suit him. *Note.* Those who will conscientiously keep the place in which God has set them, may confidently expect that their place shall still keep them. He has given his word for it. (Ps. xxxvii. 3.) Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed; whether your place be high or low, public or private. "God has not, indeed, promised that you shall never suffer from poverty or other difficulties in your place; but what will more than counterbalance all hardships, he says, "I will never leave thee, no, nor forsake thee." Blessed are they who rely on his word; they shall not be disappointed; "Lord thou hast been our dwelling place." But if any would rather look out a place for themselves, it is no wonder if they are unsettled and uncertain, and often altogether without a place like this Levite; and without doubt they will never better themselves, when all things are fairly considered.

Let us see how this man succeeded; whether he increased his profits much or not. The bargain is stated, (Ch. xvii. 10,) And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel and thy victuals. So the Levite went in. Instead of that plentiful and independent maintenance which might keep the ministers of religion unincumbered with worldly cares and business, settled by God's law, this paltry sum is more like the hire of the lowest servant. Ten shekels of silver, according to the best estimates would not be much different from five dollars in money, a suit of clothes and his victuals. The imagination can scarcely help painting this as the very terms, or not quite so good, as the prodigal engaged in to feed swine. *Note.* A priest in his proper place and character is the most dignified and valuable member of society, but when he goes out of that there is none more mean and despicable; God's faithful servants may receive very little temporal compensation for their labor, but *his blessing*, and a *good conscience* with it, makes it more and better than the wealth of the wicked. Whereas he that would leave God's work, and hire to man, whether he get much or little, can have neither of these, and so gives up by far the greatest part of his reward; and moreover puts himself under the feet of those whom he might have under him.

But there is another point of the story here to be noticed. The Levite went in to be a *priest* to Micah. The Levites had a service appointed them in the house of God, to wait on the sons of Aaron the priests; but were peremptorily prohibited from exercising any part of the priest's office; they were not so much as to look when the sons of Aaron covered the holy things, at the removals of the tabernacle. And when Korah and his company, (who were Levites,) urged their pretensions to the priesthood, it provoked God to make them examples of his displeasure, for the warning of all after ages; and the memorial of this was still preserved by the two hundred and fifty brazen plates made of the censors covering the altar; but all this was of no account at all with this Levite. Micah's offer suited him and he makes no objection to be his *priest*. *Note.* One step in error prepares the way for another; and defection in smaller matters leads on to greater corruptions, proceeding imperceptibly till men are landed in total and confirmed apostacy. So it was with this Levite. First, he left his place appointed of God, and now the place he

had looked up for himself, has this condition, that he must go another step and intrude into the priesthood, a work and character to which he was never called of God. But he is in a manner shut up to do this or not obtain the situation: which to be sure would be no very great dilemma to a man of correct understanding and tender conscience; but perhaps seemed to him a nice point to decide. Or more likely, as he had long lived in the violation of at least one order of God's house, this other would be no great trouble either. There is in all sin, and it would seem more especially in the sin of backsliding a deceitfulness to harden the conscience; therefore let us take heed lest any of us be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Let us keep close to the appointment of God in all things. Let us endeavor to have our minds, constantly impressed with the value of every jot and tittle that is his, as involving his honor, and stamped with his authority.

But now we might inquire if there is nothing to be said in defence, or as a palliation of the Levite's conduct in this matter. It was a time when religion was very low, and as always at such times the people would express their indifference to it by neglecting the ministers of religion, withholding that support which was their due according to the law; so that he might be compelled to betake himself to some other means for obtaining a livelihood. This situation with Micah had, no doubt, objections to it. He had images in his house and a priest of his own making. It was also disorderly for a Levite to be a priest, and disorderly to set up any system of public worship, in any other place or of any other form than that of God's appointment, for the tabernacle, which was at Shiloh; but it may be observed that Micah does not appear to have intended his establishment as an opposition to the tabernacle service. He had no altar or offerings, or other imitations of the divine institutions. His plan was rather for family worship, or, at most, an accommodation to his neighborhood, as a private society; and though he had images yet he acknowledged the only true God as the object of worship. (Ch. xvii. 13.) Now I know that *the Lord* or *Jehovah* will do me good, seeing I have a Levite for my priest. I suppose he meant no more by the images than as ornaments to the place of his worship, or representations of better things, that might help to fix the attention, and be aids to devotion; like the pictures that are now put into our Bibles, or the organs and fiddles in some churches. The arguments that would defend the one, would certainly support the other. But more than all, the offer made to the Levite, was that he might be a *father* to Micah, as well as a priest; that is that he might instruct and direct him in all things, taking a fatherly care and oversight of him, which would give him great advantage and influence to have whatever was disorderly reformed. This is perhaps the utmost stretch that can be made, to give a favorable view of the case; but all will not be any excuse. For, first, if indeed compelled to leave the public service of the sanctuary, for want of support; there were other means of subsistence, both lawful and honorable. But honest poverty, in God's work, was much rather to be chosen still; and as we before noticed, faith in the promise was never suffered to starve. Again, all these things noticed as disorderly in Micah's system, were so directly contrary to God's command, that no countenance or toleration was to be shown to him; he ought to have been put to death; and every one who knew of his crime, and did not take measures to have the law put in force were partakers with him. (Deut. xiii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, &c.) *Note.* Forbearance or toleration of what is contrary to the word of God, is actual rebellion against him. While there is no feature of the christian character more amiable than a forbearing and forgiving spirit, there is a limited sphere within which it is to be exercised, and beyond which nothing can be more mischievous; the

weaknesses of brethren either of natural faculties and dispositions, or of spiritual attainments, knowledge, faith and the like are proper subjects of forbearance ; and their faults in all matters of a personal kind call for the exercise of forgiveness, but in things opposite to the divine word, forbearance is sinful neglect, and forgiveness is contumacy, which in all ages has been the very flood-gate by which corruption and ruin have come in on the church. It was so in the period here referred to in the church of Israel ; if the law against enticers to idolatry had been promptly executed it would have purged that evil, which was now taking root and growing, and did grow, to the ruin of church and nation. So has it been also in all christian churches, and so will it be ; if defection is not crushed in its first bud, it will quickly crush true religion in its fruits and ultimately in its form.

As for the prospect the Levite might have of doing good through his influence as a father to Micah, the answer is briefly this, it is utterly unwarrantable to do evil that good may come ; too dangerous an experiment to join the erroneous in their corruptions, and knowingly to cast ourselves into the mire, under pretense of a design to pull others out. Such plans generally misgive and only increase the evil they seek to cure. What speed did he come ? (Ch. xvii. 11, 12.) "And the young man was with him as one of his sons. And Micah consecrated the Levite." Here is altogether another order of things : instead of being a father, he becomes like one of his sons, wholly under his authority and at his direction. And Micah consecrated the Levite ; the institution of God in the matter is turned completely upside down ; the scholar becomes the teacher, and a private member assumes to be head of the church, vested with the power of consecrating to the office of priest. Yet all this does not disturb the Levite. It is said he was content to dwell with the man. *Note.* When a man is once out of God's way, every step he takes is a new transgression till he turn to come back again to his duty. So it was both with Micah and this Levite. Micah first thought to have place of worship at home, to save the labor of going to Shiloh. In order to this, some sacred utensils were necessary ; so he got an ephod, teraphim and images. He must also have a priest ; so he violated another divine institution for it, and consecrated one of his sons, and next tempted this Levite to transgress, and become a priest. Now the Levite has gone this far and if he will be a priest he must submit to Micah's consecration. And if he will dwell in Micah's house, he must be like one of Micah's sons. If he look to Micah for his victuals and clothes, he must be under Micah's authority and direction. If a man begin to let go right and truth, in one point, he has but a slack hold of any ; and is in a fair way to lose all. He that is not faithful in that which is least, will not be faithful in that which is greatest. This case I suppose is the origin and model of patronage, at least it is a very correct example of it and its effects.

Now Micah and his priest are settled together. Shall we yet entertain a charitable hope of our Levite ? That he might be a pious well meaning man, though greatly led astray ? Let us enquire. How long they lived in harmony we are not told. The next notice of consequence that we have of him is, (ch. xviii. 20,) where we read that the men of Dan, having plundered Micah's house of the ephod and the graven image, and the teraphim, and molten image, proposed to him to go with them and be to them a father and a priest. And it is said "the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod and the teraphim and the graven image, and went into the midst of the people." Alas ! we must utterly give him up ; this puts the finishing stroke to his character ; the blackest ingratitude, the most shameless dishonesty, the meanest mercenary spirit, a total want of principle, all appear here together. But in the midst of all this we cannot

but observe God's retributive justice to Micah. He stole the silver of the images from his own mother; and now they are stolen from him. With the same measure he had meted, it was now measured to him again. And though we have no evidence that he had merited such treatment from the Levite, yet he certainly could not expect any better—for, *Note.* A man that can regardlessly trample over the order of God's house, cannot be expected to pay much respect to men's rights. He that is not faithful to God, will not likely be so to men. He that can make merchandize of the doctrines and truths of God, setting little value on them, can give no evidence or security that he will not perpetrate any immorality when the temptation to it offers. For if a man is not shocked at doctrinal error, he can have no unconquerable abhorrence at practical error. They are closely connected; as the tree is, so is its fruit. An evil tree will bring forth corrupt fruit, so unsound principles must produce unholy practices.

There is only one enquiry more we need make concerning this worthless Levite, and that is, Who was he? From the preceeding account we might clude he was the very vilest of the tribe. Some such lawless vagabond as could not be tolerated in the sober and orderly community, and therefore we find him wandering from place to place, as we have seen. And if this were the case, it would not be just to judge the whole by him. The first hint we have, as to his family, is in ch. xvii. 7, where he is said to be of Bethlehem-judah, of the family of Judah. This cannot mean that he was of Judah by descent, for then he could not be a Levite; but it is either to distinguish Bethlehem, where he dwelt, in the tribe of Judah, from another city of the same name in the tribe of Zebulun, (Joshua xix. 15,) or rather to say that he was of that family of Levites whose cities were given them in the tribe of Judah, that was the family of the Kohathites, and the first order of them also. (Joshua xxi. 9, 10.) Perhaps, then, this Levite was of that honorable and dignified family. But we are told, (Judges xviii. 30,) that Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons, were priests to the tribe of Dan, until the day of the captivity of the land. This is evidently the same man spoken of through that and the preceding chapter, and he is here said to be the grandson of Manasseh. And we may remark as before, if he had descended of Manasseh he could not have been a Levite. Moreover, Manasseh had no son called Gershom; but the Jewish critics mark the word Manasseh as faulty in one letter, and leaving out that letter, it would read the "son of Moses;" we know he had a son called Gershom, and that his grandson might now be living is very probable, for at this time Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron his brother, was standing before the ark of the Lord. (Ch. xx. 28.) We know also that the sons of Moses were nothing more than other Levites, that they were Kohathites, and might probably be ranked next to the sons of Aaron, and this agrees with what we have remarked of this Levite's original place in Judah. Farther, if this were so, it might have been a ground of his more readily assuming the priesthood, overlooking the divine appointment, he would reason that Moses being as honorable and priestly a person as Aaron, his grandsons had as good a title to the office as the grandsons of Aaron. This would also make him a most suitable person to represent the state of religion in the generation, in its most favorable aspect, if any such it had; and considering what a picture we have in him, how strikingly, how completely does it demonstrate the charge laid at the beginning, "that there arose a generation who knew not the Lord," &c. Is it possible that this is where we find the grandson of that man of God, who was faithful in all his house? That saint who had very few equals, and never had a superior among men, for meekness, holiness, public spirit, and zeal for God's honor; whose last days were

occupied in repeating his many earnest exhortations to Israel, to observe and keep all the commandments, ordinances and statutes of the Lord their God, that it might be well with them! There is, indeed, too much evidence that so it was. *Note.*—Godly parents have not always godly children; grace does not run in the blood, “which were born *not of blood*, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” Relationship to great and godly persons is indeed an honor and blessing, as it brings us more particularly within reach of such precious promises as that in Psalms ciii. 17. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on them that fear him, and *his righteousness unto children’s children*. If we well prove ourselves to be their children, laying claim by faith to the word of promise, this is a good argument and plea with God, So we find the Psalmist uses it: “I am thy servant, the son of thy hand-maid.” Yet such relationship can do nothing of itself to sanctify the nature; it was the miserable mistake of the Jews, particularly in the days of our Lord, to think so. Because they were Abraham’s seed, therefore they thought they were by nature better, holier than others, and entitled to the favor of God. But on the other hand it is a great aggravation of the sin of backsliding, and so it forms one of the darkest traits in the history of this Levite.

Application. 1. This is the only place in the whole Bible, where mention is made of a *hired priest*, and the very fact, independent of his private moral character, is set down as one of the grossest marks of a very corrupt time in the church. Can it be, then, that such a thing is to be found in the present very enlightened Christian age? There is, and that not in one instance only, but hundreds. There are many parts of our land where scarcely any other order is known. Nothing more common than ministers going out with an errand, that might as well be expressed in the Levite’s very words: “I go to sojourn where I may find a place.” And whoever offers a few shekels of silver, to a tolerable amount, may have a bargain with as little form and ceremony as was that of the Levite. Is not this as gross a violation of God’s institution as that was? God has appointed an order to be observed in the gospel church as well as under the law. He is a God of order and not of confusion. What then shall we say of those churches who by their public standards declare their belief that the presbyterial form of church government is of divine appointment, and who call themselves by that name emphatically; as if none else had any right to it, yet suffering this practice to be and to abound among them without restraint? And they are but one degree better, if so much, whose removals and settlements are first determined and concluded on with themselves; and the intervention of church courts is sought as a mere form and ceremony to sanction what was in reality done before. We mean not by this to aim a stroke at any individual, or congregation, but refer to what is open before the eyes of all who will candidly consider the present state of the visible church. They cannot but observe a spirit of disregard of church order and government almost every where manifested in a greater or less degree, a spirit of insubordination, restlessness and wilfulness, both in ministers and people, that will fully support our remark of the former.

2. How much are our hired priests better than this Levite as to principles and piety? Do we not find them taking their authority from societies which are not in the form or capacity of any church court known in the Scriptures? They might as well have Micah’s consecration of the Levite. Do we not find them ready to use almost any form of worship that is the choice of those by whom they are hired? The Scripture Psalms where they only are allowed, and human compositions where the people wish them; no objection to an organ, flute, or bass-viol, if it is there,

(and Micah's images have just as good a right) but would be strenuous if it cannot be had. Do we not see them holding communion with the most opposite doctrines? Well enough suited with presbyterial church government, and nothing against Independency. This year they are one with sound Calvinists, next year they have to look to some wealthy Hopkinsians for their few shekels of silver, and so have no fault to find with their doctrine, and the year following they are "content to dwell with" the grossest Arminians. Does not this prove to a certainty that they have no principle of their own on any of all these points? They have no choice between a doctrine and its opposite; that is between truth and error. And what shall we say of whole churches who knowingly tolerate, countenance and encourage the practice, by crying down distinctions? The whole is chargeable with the sin of such individuals.

3. What does all this prove as respects this generation, but just what was there proved, viz: that there has arisen a generation that knows not the Lord, nor yet the works that he has done for his church! This no doubt will be condemned and rejected with indignation by many, as a most uncharitable and unjust sentence. But, let it not be utterly put down till it be examined and convicted of falsehood. When this is said of Israel, we do not apprehend that it intends the whole and every one who lived in that period, that they had all apostatised from the true knowledge of God. On the contrary we know there still was a remnant of hidden ones; which even in that exceedingly corrupt time in which Elijah lived, was to the number of seven thousand. The charge is laid against the prevailing party, which was probably the great majority, and therefore gave the character to the generation. And to this same extent do we consider it applicable to the present generation. Again, when it is said even of the corrupt part, that they "knew not the Lord," it cannot mean that they had lost all literal knowledge and regard for the things of God, for we see that Micah was at great pains and expense to establish the worship of God, religion seemed to be the great object of his care and attention. This Levite also was wholly devoting himself to the service of religion; and the Danites spoken of chap. xviii. 5, were by no means forgetful. Yet all this does not exempt them from the charge of not knowing the Lord. So in vain will any one plead the abounding of knowledge and the means of knowledge, tracts, Sunday schools, Bible societies, missionaries, &c., the remarkable zeal, activity, and devotedness of many, and the boundless liberality of others to benevolent objects, as a proof that such a charge cannot lie against the present generation; for unless something better and of another kind can be brought forward, it will not clear us; for it is manifest that the charge is founded on another ground, namely, that they trampled on his authority, in the doctrine and order of his house. They had not faith in his institutions, nor reverence for them, nor love to them as involving his honor, and being the appointed means of his people's communion with him. They quite disregard the many threatenings, cautions, and peremptory injunctions to observe every tittle; and this is what God holds as proof that they knew him not. But if these things will amount to so much, surely the particulars we have noticed in our own time cannot fail of supporting the same charge against us. And if any thing is needed to make it more clear, the application of the other part of the charge will do so. It is, "they knew not the works that God had done for his church." The works there particularly referred to, are no doubt all those displays of God's power and goodness in behalf of Israel, from their coming out of Egypt to their settlement in Canaan, but equally applicable to every display he has given of himself for his church in any age or nation. Now the only instance to which we shall refer for our present purpose, is that of the Reformation from popery—a work of

God no less great and glorious, (though of another kind,) than the bringing of Israel out of Egypt. By his right hand of power, and his outstretched arm, he brought out his church from the darkness and tyranny of Roman Antichrist. He led her through fire and water; every point of the doctrine, worship and government of his house was obtained for her at the price of the blood of saints; yet he wrought marvellously for the support of his faithful witnesses, and for the furtherance of his cause. In particular his hand was manifest in strengthening his servants for that deadly struggle with perjured tyrants in Scotland, from the year 1650 to 1688, as also previous to 1638, maintaining the order of worship and form of church government which is enjoined in the word. Now there is nothing more manifest than that the great mass of professors of religion in the present day, are literally ignorant of that work which God wrought for his church, the fruits of which they are now reaping in that peace and liberty, civil and religious, which we enjoy. Many also who have a historical knowledge of the facts, disown God's hand in them, sneer at the bigotry of those who suffered for the sake of God's truth, (of whom the world was not worthy,) and show their utter ingratitude and disesteem of God's work, by undervaluing, classing with non-essentials and trifles the very points which he then so eminently owned and honored his servants in maintaining; I mean the purity of worship and government, which is contemptuously trampled on by hireling priests. And the full bent of the generation is to break down at once with axes and hammers, the carved work of his sanctuary, which was then with such labor and expense built up. Now, in one word, to despise the doings of the Lord is to despise himself. These remarks, therefore, instead of irritating any one, should stir up every one to a serious consideration of the matter. Is it indeed the sentence of God in his word, that we are a generation that know not the Lord, nor the works that he has done for his church? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord from whom we have deeply revolted.

M. H.

ART. II. *The Sin of Nadab and Abihu.*

(Continued from page 201.)

Leviticus chap. x. verse 3, last clause: "And Aaron held his peace."

IN this brief and impressive passage, the Spirit sets before us the deep and humble submission of Aaron, under one of the heaviest calamities that ever wrung the heart of a parent. His two sons, we have seen, were cut down before his face; cut down in judgment by the thunderbolt of heaven, in the act of their guilt, in the very moment of their unhalloved and irreverent approach into the tremendous presence of the Lord of Glory. Aaron their afflicted father, under this sad and terrible stroke, was silent, not in sullenness, or indifference, but acknowledging that the stroke was just, the doom deserved. He was dumb, he "opened not his mouth, because the Lord did it." He knew, as his affectionate brother had reminded him, that thus the glory of God was signally displayed, and a solemn warning given to every soul, of the awful danger of not sanctifying God's name in drawing nigh to him according to the appointed order; in not worshipping him with reverence and godly fear. Thus, though the heart of the father was ready to sink under this heavy judgment, yet love to a covenant God, zeal for his honor, and the remembrance of his own past guilt, led him to bow under the hand of the Lord,

in the spirit which actuated Eli under a similar calamity; "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." Such a terrible mark of God's displeasure was a heavy stain on Aaron and his family; but his sons had attempted to stain God's glory and pollute his worship, and Aaron, in the spirit of an Abraham, was willing that his sons should be the sacrifice; was willing to bear this reproach, to suffer this fearful blow, that the honor of that God, his guilty children had insulted, and his worship which they had polluted, might be upheld in their purity, and the name of God be sanctified to latest generations. Christian, are you willing that God should be thus glorified in you and yours? None of the people of God are exempt from affliction. Where is the family that sorrow has never entered, that death has never desolated? Let every Christian remember this. Trials you must expect to meet with; the waters of affliction you must pass through, before you reach the heavenly Canaan; the rivers of sorrow and the raging flame you must encounter, ere you reach your Father's house in peace. Desolating judgments may pass over you and yours, may sweep away your dearest comforts; yet bow with this afflicted servant of God in deep submission; like him glorify God in the fire, "and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." His almighty arm shall be underneath to support you, to bring good out of apparent evil, and lead you in safety to that city of our God, where the heart shall never more be wrung with anguish, nor the eye dimmed with tears.

"Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared." "Fear not for I am with thee. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

What is proposed in making a few practical remarks from these words, is to consider, in the first place, The design of God in the afflictions of his people. Secondly, What is implied in being silent under afflictions.

Afflictions spring not from the dust, they come not by chance. "Shall there be evil in the city and the Lord hath not done it?" "Evil came down from the Lord unto the gate of Jerusalem." The design of God in these afflictions is the good of his people. The fruit of their sharp and fiery trials is to take away their sins, to sanctify their souls, and ripen them for glory. Though no chastening, for the present, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless afterward, to the redeemed, "it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness;" softening their hearts, humbling their spirits, pointing to the glory to be revealed, and enabling to say, we glory in tribulation also, "knowing that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

In considering, then, the design of God in the afflictions of his people, we observe,

1st. That they are sent in wisdom. Though the way of God is often in the sea, and his path in the deep waters, and his judgments incomprehensible to worms of the dust, yet shall he make all things work together for good to them that love God. "We have had fathers of our flesh, who for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." Lamentation, mourning, and woe have covered the earth, have entered every family, and wrung every heart. Changes and trials are perhaps even now, reader, commissioned against *you*. Perhaps God, in his mysterious Providence, may send upon you sickness, "vexation, and rebuke,"—may cause you to pass through overwhelming scenes of calamity and distress. Parents, He may visit you soon with a trial like that of the afflicted Aaron.—

The arrow of death is perhaps on the wing to pierce your nearest and dearest; your beloved child may be struck down in death before you, ere to-morrow dawns; you may soon have to weep over the graves of *all*. Children, your parents may, in a moment, by the hand of death, be taken away from you. Husband, your beloved wife may soon be torn from you. In deadly disease, in the feeble frame and failing eye, He may send the sad and terrible message to you once sent to Ezekiel from the throne:—"Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke." Wife, you too may soon be called to witness the dying struggles of your husband, your companion, your guardian, your earthly all; and your heart left to bleed in anguish over his loss. But in these, and in every other trial, while forced to say in the bitterness of sorrow, "how unsearchable are God's judgments, and his ways past finding out;" yet remember that your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. "His eyes are upon the ways of men." And while his eye beheld all these waves of affliction rushing upon you, and while his power in a moment could have arrested them, could have chained the king of terrors, could have commanded away the arrow of death from you and yours, and blessed you with peace, and joy, and health, and plenty; yet he knows better what is for your good. Uninterrupted prosperity would make us forget our duty, and our God. He mercifully sends us afflictions to humble our pride, to quench our lusts, to teach us the vanity of the world, to detach our hearts from its perishing possessions, and lead us to seek the eternal riches of heaven. He cuts down our comforts, he calls away children, parents and friends, that we may not make idols of them, and lean upon broken reeds, instead of the Rock of Ages. He sends us fiery trials, to make us dissatisfied with this waste, howling wilderness, to drive us from a place that is soon to be "burned up." You cannot doubt of the merciful design of these trials, when you remember that they are all ordered by Him, who has so loved you as to give his eternal Son to a death of agony and shame for your redemption; and think you he would leave those who are so dear to him, the purchase of the blood of his Son, exposed to affliction and woe! Think you he would suffer them to feel one pang, to groan in anguish beneath one afflictive stroke, more than was for their good? In these dark and inscrutable providences, you hear a voice from the throne of your heavenly Father, saying, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." He led the patriarchs and prophets of old, he leads his people still, through a waste, howling wilderness, through storms and tempests of sorrow, through affliction, darkness and death, to his "holy habitation." The Bible, the statute book of heaven, the charter of your hopes, plainly tells you, that through much tribulation, you must enter the kingdom of heaven. We cannot enter the land of promise but through the desert, the vale of tears, the waters of affliction, the Jordan of death. And be it remembered, Christians, that these afflictions to which we are appointed, and which are not to be escaped, are *all deserved*; and therefore we are bound to own, not only the wisdom, but the justice of God, in them. The Lord afflicteth not willingly. He has no pleasure in the destruction and death of the sons of men. "Now, therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, thou art just in all that is brought upon us, for we have done wickedly." While, then, we humbly bend, and adore, under the heaviest strokes which infinite Wisdom sees to be necessary for us, let us also rejoice that he will lead in safety through all, will open a way through the great deeps, for his "ransomed to pass over," and bring to where, in the light of heaven, we shall see that infinite wisdom directed, and infinite *mercy* ordered, every affliction that fell upon us, every dark and trying providence that beset our path; and where, in

adoring wonder and love, we shall sing in triumph "He hath done all things well: Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; *just and true* are thy ways, thou King of Saints."

2dly. We observe then, in the second place, that afflictions are sent to God's people in mercy and love. "For whom the Lord loveth, He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." Remembering then, the affliction and the misery, the wormwood and the gall, remembering the days of bitterness, the nights of heaviness and sorrow, through which you have passed, the agonizing woes with which you have been forced to struggle, the sad bereavements you have been called to bear; remembering them all, can you not say, that they are all the chastisements of love, that mercy was seen and felt in all? What would have been your situation at this moment, if you had never been blessed with affliction, never entered into the furnace, but left to the poisoning, soul-hardening influence of uninterrupted prosperity? Your most overwhelming afflictions are amongst your most precious privileges. They bring you to the throne of mercy, they sweeten your communion with a covenant God, they lead you to glory in that cross which has purchased heaven for the soul, to flee to that blood for pardon and support, which has made every trial a messenger of mercy. Our sin is the real cause of our suffering. Our sin makes affliction necessary. To all the trials and vexations of life, it is sin that gives the sting; into every cup of wo, it is sin infuses the bitterness. And this is the merciful intention of these trials, to take away sin, and fill us with love to God. "O hear ye the rod then, and who hath appointed it." The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? In all your afflictions, he is afflicted; the "Angel of his Presence" will save you. The "Angel of his Presence," rules the raging of the storm, sitteth upon the floods of sorrow, to check their fury, and amid their raging, to bless his people with peace. In his love, and in his pity, he redeemed you from death by his blood; in mercy and love, he will defend you in the hour of danger, and even when the "floods lift up their waves," when the fury of the storm is dreadful, and death seems inevitable, will enable you to triumph. "The Lord reigneth: The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea: Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof: The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." Listen then, to the voice of the God of mercy, who in tenderness, love and wisdom, visits you with afflictions. "For the iniquity of his covetousness, was I wroth with him and smote him," yet "I will not contend for ever—I will restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners." "In a little wrath, I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted! behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." My kindness shall not depart from thee, terror shall not "come near thee—no weapon formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

3dly. In the third place, we observe, that afflictions of themselves, are not a mark of God's hatred, nor any proof of peculiar guilt. This has often been the erroneous supposition of the people of God themselves, envying the prosperity of the wicked. Thus *they* erred, who supposed

that those Galileans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices, were sinners above *all* the Galileans, because they suffered such things: and that those eighteen, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem; "I tell you nay," says the searcher of hearts, "but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Thus the friends of Job falsely judged, and wounded the heart of him, whom the hand of God had touched: ascribing his overwhelming trials, to his peculiar guilt. "Remember," say they, "who ever perished being innocent, or where were the righteous cut off?" The Lord of Hosts, who knows what we all are, tells us that Job was his servant, that there was not his like upon the earth: Yet the arrows of the Almighty pierced him, the terrors of God were set as in battle array against him, while the foul accuser receives permission to bring upon him sudden and fearful woes; stroke following stroke, and desolation advancing upon desolation, till in one day, the richest man of the East, was reduced to a beggared, childless, loathsome state. And yet Job was the favorite, and friend of Almighty God. The abandoned and profane, whom God hateth, were probably "taking the timbrel and harp, and rejoicing at the sound of the organ;" while this servant of the Lord, this friend of the poor and fatherless, was bound in the cords of affliction; bowed to the dust under calamities the most severe, smitten from head to foot with sore boils, a burden to himself, and forced to cry out "my kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me: I called my servant, and he gave me no answer:—and they whom I loved are turned against me. My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth. Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." Thus harshly, and unjustly, did the disciples of our Lord themselves judge, when they asked him, saying, "master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" And thus the heathen inhabitants of Malta judged of Paul, when they saw the viper coming out of the heat, and fastening on his hand; "no doubt," said they among themselves, "this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live." Beware of this erroneous and cruel way of judging of the afflictions of others. *Who were they*, that because of his amazing woes, esteemed the "man of sorrows," stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted for his own guilt; and who, in the bitterness of their malice and rage said, "God hath forsaken him, persecute and take him?" How would such a way of judging, lead us to estimate the sufferings of those saints of the most high, who had trial of cruel mockings, and scourging; who were stoned, sawn asunder, and slain with the sword? Take heed how you censure the poor sufferer. The father does not *hate* the child whom he chastises; it is not cruelty, that leads him to force his child to swallow the bitter medicine. No, it is love, a proof of his real, wise, deep and heartfelt affection. And thus, our heavenly Father shows his love to us, in the afflictions with which he visits, in the bitter trials, with which the great Physician purifies our souls. Christians, your sorrows and afflictions are not the wound of an enemy, but the necessary discipline of our best friend:—"for whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live."

II. It was proposed to consider, under the second general division, what is implied in being silent under afflictions. And here we would observe, that it does not imply a carelessness or insensibility, under the chastising hand of God. Thus to make light of his visitations, thus to refuse to listen to the voice of the rod, thus to be careless and unfeeling; "eating

flesh and drinking wine," when Almighty God is calling to "weeping and to mourning," for sin; thus to act on the principles of the ignorant and unfeeling Stoics, as though we thought that pain is no pain, that affliction is no affliction; or say, with the brutalized Epicurean, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die," is a sin, which will cause the "arrows of Jehovah's quiver to enter into the reins," and fill them with bitterness and sorrow of heart; it is a sin which calls for desolating judgments. "O Lord, thou has stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return:—Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities; every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces." No chastening, even to the believer, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous. The afflictions that wring the heart with anguish, the Christian feels as keenly as other men, and the word of his heavenly Father, does not forbid him to mourn and weep. While he is exhorted not to faint under the rebukes of his best friend, he is also solemnly commanded "not to *despise* the chastening of the Lord." (Heb. xii. 5.) We must neither sink in despondency and murmuring under the hand of God, nor yet make light of his rebukes. Job felt his afflictions to be awfully severe, and even when confessing in deep submission the justice of the stroke, that the Lord had only taken what he had given—what was the Lord's, and not his; yet in his woful and bereaved condition cries out, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit. I am made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me. My friends scorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears unto God." And thus David, even when justly suffering for his guilt under the chastening hand of God, earnestly pleads, "Remove thy stroke away from me; I am consumed by the blow of thy hand. O spare me, that I may recover strength before I go hence, and be no more." The "faithful Abraham," when his beloved wife died at Kirjatharba, "came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her." They are said to be "devout men," who "carried Stephen to his burial and made great lamentation over him." But while the Scriptures allow us to feel our afflictions, and when stricken to grieve, while He who for us suffered all the sinless infirmities of our nature, who wept at the grave of Lazarus, and who cried out under his agony, when his *soul* was about to be made an offering for our sin, (Mat. xxvi. 39,) while he does not forbid us to weep, he does forbid us to shed tears of murmuring, or despair; to cherish that sorrow which worketh death.

We observe, then, in the first place, that to be silent under afflictions implies that we own the hand of God in them, and confess their justice. We must say, under the heaviest strokes of the rod, with David, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth," in a way of murmuring, because thou didst it: and confess, with the dying Hezekiah, "He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it," &c. We must beware of feeling or thinking, much less daring to say, with the peevish Jonah, when a gourd is withered, a comfort withdrawn, an affliction sent, or a worm prepared by God, to blast even *all* our earthly hopes, "I do well to be angry." Oh no; let us rather say, with Eli, as in the passage formerly quoted, "It is the Lord," and confess, with Job, "Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he taketh away, who can hinder him? Who will say unto him, what doest thou?"

2dly. Silence under afflictions implies that we bear them patiently, as deserved, as intended for our good, and the glory of God. When we reflect on our guilt, on our numberless transgressions, on our abuse of mer-

cies, our ingratitude for the countless blessings Jehovah has poured upon us; we may well wonder that he spares us for a day, for a moment; we may well wonder that he does not commission the stars in their courses to fight against us; the air we breathe to blast us with death; the earth, polluted and burdened by our guilt, to open and swallow us up. And shall we complain, then, when for our good, and in tenderness and love he sends afflictions? Shall we complain because the waters of life are troubled that the soul may be healed? Shall we complain of trials intended to wean us from the world, to lead us to bring forth the "peaceable fruits of righteousness?" the effect of which, under the blessing of God, will be, "quietness and assurance forever," in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Remember, also, as Moses reminded Aaron, these trials shall be made subservient, not only to your good, but to the glory of God. There is not an event in the universe of God, not a leaf of the forest, not an atom that floats in the sunbeam, not a flower that blooms, not a hair of your head that falls, not a sparrow that dies, not a trial that befalls you, but is directed and controlled by the Providence, and shall redound to the glory of God. Glorify God, then, in the fire, by patiently submitting, with Aaron, to the stroke of the Almighty, and whether he send sickness or health, pain or pleasure, death or life, let us say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

In conclusion, it may be remarked, that trials are not peculiar to the redeemed. The voice of mourning and lamentation is heard through the length and breadth of our miserable world. Death enters the palace as easily as the cottage, and the bitter streams of sorrow sweep over the throne as well as the dungeon. All must drink of the bitter cup. "I will restore her again to life," was the language, it is said, of Democritus, a heathen philosopher, to Darius, a Persian prince, who mourned and was inconsolable for the loss of his beloved wife; "I will restore her again to life, provided you are able to engrave on her tomb the names of three persons who have never mourned." The king, it is said, made inquiry to find such persons, but soon finding it to be utterly unavailing, he was silent.

While the good as well as the bad, then, are alike exposed to suffering, the trials of the righteous, we have seen, are disarmed of their sting, and deprived of their bitterness. Pray then that affliction may be sanctified. Remember, that trials of themselves, can bring no blessing to the soul. The plough breaks up the fallow ground, but if the husbandman sow not the seed, only thorns and thistles will grow where the plough has been driven. And thus afflictions may blast the comforts of the wicked, and bring their bodies to the dust, yet if God give not the word, and sanctify them not, they will prove a curse, and not a blessing; the fruit will be, not "to take away sin," but an increase of wickedness; "grapes of gall, and wine the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps." "Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more." Afflictions of themselves, then, will not slay corruption, will not break the hard heart: though emptied from vessel to vessel, from condition to condition, the wicked man will be wicked still. The unsullied snow will not wash the skin of the Ethiopian white; nor will the waters of affliction wash them clean that are "accustomed to do evil." We may then be amongst the most afflicted of the sons of men, and yet be "in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity," and the sword of the almighty may be drawn against us to destroy. Our afflictions do not, of themselves, prove that we are the children God. We may be miserable here, and yet not be happy hereafter. We may in our life-time receive no "good things," and yet through eternity not be "comforted," but "tormented." Have our afflictions then been sanctified to our souls? Are we with Aaron, bowing under the mighty hand of God, willing that He should do with us and

ours, as seemeth him good? Are dark and afflictive providences surrounding you? Is the soul groaning in anguish under a wound for which the world can afford no remedy? Are you suffering under a blow from a bitter and malignant enemy? Are the injuries you have received great, the wounds inflicted deep, the reproaches and insults repeated, slanderous, and unjust? Christian, it is not "Shimei" who curses and reviles you. It is not the Chaldean and Sabeen robbers who plunder you of your property, or your good name; it was not Satan that smote you with sore affliction, and brought the blast of death which swept away your nearest and dearest. Look beyond second causes, look above the instrument, to the hand that guides it. The "wrath of man," is a rod in the hand of a tender Father, which He uses to chastise in measure, to sanctify and bless his people. It was thus you know with David, under the irritating and cruel language of Shimei, "Let him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him." It was thus with Job, when reduced to beggary by the robbers of the desert, and when Satan was permitted to bring a great wind from the wilderness, and bury his ten beloved children in the ruins of their elder brother's house. 'This bereaved mourner looks above, and beyond the power and malice of men and devils, to his covenant God. "The Lord gave," says he in deep submission, "and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." When enemies, then, revile and despitefully use you, *pray* for them, and say with David, "The Lord hath bidden them." When health is taken away, when the Lord is threatening to "cut you off with pining sickness;" when death enters your dwelling and cuts down your parent, your wife, your child; when all your prospects of earthly happiness are blasted, say with Job, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Plead, that when called to enter the furnace, when bowed down with grief, when on the brink of the grave, you may learn obedience by the things you suffer. Plead, that He who rules the raging of the ocean, and the rushings of the whirlwind, who stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of the waves, and the tumults of the people, would say to the floods of sorrow and the storms of persecution, "peace, be still." Plead, when a bitter and malignant world seems to rejoice in your wretchedness; when all without is distress and desolation; when within the heart is breaking, and the body, bowed down with sickness, is hastening to the grave, that you may be enabled to "dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Thus there will be peace in your heart, there will be joy in your soul; and when the world deems you of all men, most miserable, you can tell them your sorrows bring unutterable peace unto your heart; that you would not exchange your most "sorrowful moments for their happiest hours," your sackcloth for a monarch's robes. Should you even go down to the dust, wondering at mysterious and overwhelming Providences, and unable to see through the darkness, the hand of wisdom and love guiding and ordering them, yet knowing there is not one trial that befalls you in this valley of weeping, but has an intimate connection with your eternal welfare; not one affliction more than is necessary; you can rejoice, under them all, that they are working for your good; and that the stream of time, as it rapidly rolls along, is bearing you every hour nearer to your Father's house, where all shall be explained, where your eyes shall weep no more, where there shall be no more death—neither sorrow nor crying; where "thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away." "The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

ART. III. *Some improper or doubtful expressions considered.*

MR. EDITOR,—

I here transmit to you for insertion in the *Monitor*, if it is thought proper, a few critical remarks upon some doubtful or improper expressions, which are in too frequent use on subjects connected with religion, with a view to shew the impropriety of using them. Correct speaking, as well as correct thinking, in relation to divine things, we are to study, that we may honour the truth; and as it is through the truth and not error, that the Lord carries on his work of grace in the heart, according to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, in his intercessory prayer, "Sanctify them through thy truth," so it is necessary as a preservative against error; for truth hangs together by a chain of connexion: and error has also its connecting links, by which those who lean to it in one point, are ready to fall into it in others. There is a progression in error which persons are in danger of getting into, if they once come into the way of it. I know that the meaning of those who use the expressions here reviewed, is often more sound than the expressions themselves. But we are to guard against error in words, as well as against error in judgment: as the one leads to the other, if not in respect to the person who using them attaches to them a sound meaning; yet in respect to those they are spoken to, if they receive them in their true import, or understand them as they are susceptible of a bad sense. If what is forwarded to you now, of this kind of matter, is thought to answer a good purpose, more may be at your service in time coming.

Y.

I. Mercy is denied by some to be an essential attribute or perfection of God's nature.

But that it is an essential attribute appears, 1st. As it belongs to his name. Hence, see Exodus xxxiii. 19, taken in connexion with xxxiv. 6. "And he said I will make all my goodness to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious." "And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth." But God's name is a description of what he is in himself. 2d. According to the same passage it makes a part of his essential glory and goodness. For it was in answer to Moses's request, "I beseech thee shew me thy glory," that the Lord passed by and proclaimed his name there. And we are told that the Lord in proclaiming his name, thus made all his goodness to pass before him. 3d. Mercy is said to belong to God, (Psalm lxii. 12,) not simply because it is his sovereign will and pleasure that he should exercise it, and because he has revealed himself in the character of a merciful God in the scriptures, and has abundant mercy for sinners of Adam's family in Christ; but because it is one of his essential excellencies that he is a God of mercy. 4th. God is infinite in his mercy. But an infinity of excellence or goodness in any view attributed to God, points at that as belonging to his own essence, because there is nothing properly infinite but what is in God himself, who is without all bounds or limits in his perfections and essential properties. For "canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." The very same language in substance, which is used concerning the love of God, by the Apostle, which is in effect the same thing with his mercy, as respects it in its bearing toward mankind, sinners, "O the breadth and length, the height and depth of the love of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out!" 5th. It cannot be an at-

tribute or perfection of God at all, if it is not essential to him, because there can be nothing accidental to God. There may be so to us; as justice, goodness and mercy in us are accidents which we may have, or be without, as we are made partakers of the divine image or not. But nothing can be considered as accidental to God without destroying the simplicity and absolute perfection of his nature.

A reason why God is denied by some to be essentially merciful is because he is sovereign in the exercise of his mercy. But he is also sovereign in the exercise of his goodness generally, both common and special under which his mercy is to be considered: yet it will not be denied that the Lord is essentially good, both as respects that goodness as it is in himself, and in its relative consideration, when it has a proper object to be exercised upon. God is said to be love, yet he is sovereign in his love as he had it towards man in the purpose of his love from eternity: and it is sovereign in the flowings of it forth towards its objects in time, in their effectual calling and whole progress of a work of sanctification. He resolves it himself into his own sovereign love and pleasure as the reason why one was its object and not another; and as to the bestowment of the blessings which flow from it in time—"I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee:" giving of these blessings to every one according to the measure of the gift of Christ in the same exercise of his sovereignty. And why should the fact, that God is sovereign in his mercy, be adduced to show that mercy is not essential to him, while the fact that he is sovereign in his goodness generally, and in the exercise of other perfections of his nature, is not made an argument to prove that these are also not essential to him?

The fact that God is essential in his mercy does not make it necessary that on this ground he give out or exercise his mercy in a relative point of view, any more than that he exercise any other perfection or attribute of his nature. Though he is essentially just, and holy, and wise, and good; and though he is essentially truth itself, it was not necessary, from his nature, that he should ever have any creature, man or angel to exercise any of these perfections upon. But all these perfections ever were in God, and ever will be, as the sum of all perfection. And mercy, as good in itself, cannot but be in the nature of God; at the same time that it is in him as a communicable or imitable perfection, wherein man, as partaking of his image, may have a resemblance, as well as in his holiness, his truth, his wisdom, power and goodness.

It is to be remarked, that in respect to the perfections of God, or attributes of God, it belongs to some of them to create their own objects; as the power of God is put forth in bringing its objects into being; and even the wisdom of God in the first actual manifestation of it. But it is not so in respect to others of the divine perfections. They suppose an antecedent object, (as one properly mentions) and that qualified in such a manner as that these perfections may be employed about them as the vindictive justice of God, and pardoning mercy of God, cannot be shown unless there are sinners for these to show themselves through. For if there be no sinners, none can be punished or pardoned. Justice finds in the sinner, standing guilty in his own person before God, a proper subject for it to be exercised upon. But mercy requires that he be not only a sinner, but a sinner for whom mercy was designed in the purpose of God, and for whom an atonement is made by Christ, as it cannot be exercised in inconsistency with justice. This will answer an objection which will be made by some, viz: that "if God is essentially merciful, as he is essentially just, and holy, and wise, and powerful, then he must necessarily exercise it." For God was under no necessity in himself to exercise any of his perfections relatively, further than it was necessary from his own

sovereign will and pleasure, that there should be objects which his justice and mercy, truth and holiness, power and goodness, should be employed about. The sovereignty of God is connected originally with the relative display of all his perfections upon man, or about man, as the subject of his moral government.

II. Mercy, some call God's darling attribute.

But no perfection or attribute of God is more dear to him than another, as all his perfections are to be resolved into himself. His love and goodness, and his mercy, are just himself. His truth and faithfulness, justice and holiness, infinite wisdom and almighty power, are just himself, who is infinitely good and excellent in them all. They are so himself, that according to systematic writers generally, they are not to be considered as distinct from his essence, nor as separable, the one from the other, though spoken of distinctly, to meet our finite capacities, but as the one infinite perfection of the one Jehovah, who is a being of absolutely uncompounded excellence. Hence God is said to be love and light. In the person of the Son he is said to be goodness, and called the truth, &c. He is the Holy One. As he is infinite in them all, in none of them can there be a superiority or excellence above another, or any one he delights in more than another. If there is any perfection of God in which he accounts himself to be more glorified than another, His Holiness would seem to be that perfection, as we find an emphasis is used in respect to the Holiness of God in the scriptures, which is used concerning none of the rest, in the frequent threefold repetition of the word holy, in speaking of the perfection of God's holiness, as in Isaiah chap. vi. and other places. He is said to be glorious in his holiness. The truth and faithfulness of God seems also to employ much of the attention of the saints, especially in their songs of praise to God. He is said to be encompassed about with his faithfulness, a mode of expression which is not used concerning even the love or mercy of God. But God is alike glorious in all his perfections, and his saints are concerned to give him the glory of them all without any preference. To suppose that one attribute of God was more a darling attribute to himself than another would be something like supposing that there are better and worse among the perfections and attributes of Deity. God is said indeed to delight in mercy; but this does not mean that he has any more satisfaction in it as a perfection of his nature, or in the exercise of it, than in his justice. It only signifies that he is by no means unwilling to give out his mercy, or show it to sinners, but freely and willingly to do so. And this is said for the encouragement of sinners to trust in his mercy.

III. Another expression which is much in use, is, that "one drop of Christ's blood is sufficient to save a lost world, had not God seen meet that our salvation should be by the death of Christ," which I consider to be unscriptural and therefore improper as the following will shew.

Sin had death to follow it as its punishment. And the surety bearing the punishment of sin in the room of his people had to die the death. "Without shedding of blood," it is said, "there is no remission:" and the shedding of it unto the death is intended, as this was typified by the animals offered up in sacrifice under the law, all of which had to die the death, to typically represent the necessity of Christ's death, in bearing the sins of his people. Nor did this necessity arise only from the appointment of God that it should be so, but from the proper demerit of sin, the wages of which is death, so that Christ being made sin for us, he had to die the death that we might be delivered from death; death temporal as the wages of sin and as having the sting of sin in it, and death spiritual and eternal, as all taken together constitute the proper punishment of sin through him.

“Die man or justice must; unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.”

To say that “one drop of Christ’s blood is sufficient to save a lost world,” carries in it an appearance of a respectful value put upon the blood of Christ, who is an infinite person, and whose sufferings accordingly, both collectively and separately considered, had an infinite value in them, as the blood he shed was the blood of God, and all his sufferings the sufferings of God himself in our nature, in the person of the Son. But at the same time it exceedingly detracts from the glory of divine grace, as it makes a great part of what Christ did and met with in the work of our salvation to be unnecessary, otherwise than by a mere appointment of God, that our salvation should be in this way; while we find on the contrary this brought into view in the scriptures as an evidence of the love and grace of the Father, that he sent his son to die for us; and as a very notable evidence of it, (1 John iv. 10,) which indeed would be no love at all, if there was not a necessity for his death in order that the honor of the justice and holiness of God, together with the other perfections of Deity might be maintained. It is mentioned also as an evidence of the love and grace of Christ himself, that many waters could not quench his love, nor all the floods drown it; the waters and floods of divine wrath he had to pass through in the work of our redemption.

The above expression is a reflection upon the wisdom, justice and goodness of God. Wherein would the wisdom, or justice, or goodness of God appear in giving up Christ unto the death for the sins of his people, if one drop of his blood could answer for the salvation of a whole world? There would be neither wisdom, nor justice, nor goodness in this. Not wisdom; if one drop of Christ’s blood could have saved a lost world, and yet death is made the penalty he had to endure, as he was made sin for us. The wisdom of God appears in apportioning the punishment of sin to its due demerit, even as Christ met with it in the law place of his people. The covenant of grace being well ordered in all things; it is well ordered in this, that a person able to bear the full punishment due to sin in the place of those whom this covenant embraces, is provided and that this punishment he is made to endure. But it would not be so, if more than what was the due punishment of it was laid upon him. Not justice, in enacting more of Christ the surety than what the law required as the proper punishment of sin. If one drop of Christ’s blood could save a lost world, how could justice demand his death? Not goodness; as the goodness of God even in the salvation of sinners through Christ is displayed in providing a substitute to answer for them, seeing that his justice could not allow in a consistency with its nature sin to go unpunished. But not in laying a heavier punishment upon him than what the law itself called for, or than would have answered for them. It is contrary to the truth of God who declares that Christ, as the surety, being made sin for his people, took their law place that he might answer for them, and so standing in their room, “he was wounded for their transgressions and bruised for their iniquities, the chastisement of their peace being laid upon him,” (that chastisement which the law demanded and was necessary to bring about their peace, nothing more and nothing less,) “that they by his stripes might be healed.”

We have the fitness and the necessity of his death, as the only means of the redemption of a lost world of elect sinners, set forth to us in very explicit language by himself, in the conversation he had with the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe, ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?” Was it not meet? as if he had said; was it not necessary from

the justice and holiness of God, that if he would have sinners saved by his grace, that it be through my obedience and death as a complete satisfaction to his justice, and as a means through which all the divine perfections could harmonise gloriously in redemption work? And we have the same thing set forth by the Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ii. verse 10. "For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." His sufferings unto the death in the making of our atonement for the sins of his people, is what is treated of there by the Apostle. And it became him, a three in one God, or was suitable to his perfectly holy nature, that if he would save sinners of Adam's family at all, he should save them in this way. And in prospect of redemption work, as to be accomplished by Christ in this manner, we find the Old Testament church singing in the language of anticipation, in the 85th psalm, verses 10 and 11. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven."

An expression of similar import with the one now under consideration is sometimes used, viz: that "God could have saved sinners, if he had seen meet to do so, without an atonement." But what is said above will serve also to show the impropriety of this. We are not to be too curiously disposed in our inquiries concerning what God can do. But this we know, that he cannot deny himself, nor act contrary to his holy and perfect nature. And as justice belongs to God, as well as mercy, the salvation of sinners must be in a way which is consistent with both. For, "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? While "mercy and truth go before his face," "justice and judgment are the habitation," or foundation, "of his throne."

IV. The exhortation is often given, "*Make up your peace with God.*" And often in prayer God is addressed thus, "*May we be enabled to make up our peace with thee.*"*

The language in both instances is improper, and carries in it much of a legal appearance. We are not to make up our peace with God, and cannot do it. Christ has made this peace for us by the blood of his cross, as see Eph. ii. 15. And he makes over this peace to us in the Gospel. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you, (says Christ,) not as the world giveth give I unto you." It is said of Christ, "This man shall be our peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and shall tread in our palaces." God is called "the God of peace." And all this makes it evident that the peace is already made, and made on heaven's side, not on ours; and as a proclamation to this effect is given in the Gospel, we have but to comply with proposals of peace made, that we may come into the enjoyment of the blessing. We would not say of a traitor, when he obtains a free pardon of high treason against his prince, and his country, and by their unmerited generosity is restored to his former privileges, that he made the peace with his prince or his country, he so betrayed. Nor of a criminal, that he made the peace when his crime is pardoned, so as that the sentence of the law is not executed upon him, and he is restored to his former standing as a citizen. No more will the language apply concerning a pardoned sinner, who has that peace with God which is through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The two expressions above mentioned may do in the mouths of Arminians, who maintain that all that Christ did by his obedience and death, was to render God placable, so as that by faith and repentance as condi-

* Query.—May not these expressions be warranted from Isaiah xxvii. 5?—ED. MONITOR.

tionary means on our part, we may obtain or procure his favor; or, in other words, make up the peace with him: thus dividing the work of their salvation with Christ if they do not take it out of his hands entirely. But they will not do for those who would hold the truth as it is in Jesus. They carry too much of an Arminian air for believers in the absolute freeness of the grace of God. I do not deny that they are sometimes used, unthinkingly, by some of those who are sound in the main, in the great and leading doctrines of Christianity. But as unwarranted by the word of God, and dangerous, the one as an exhortation often given to persons on sick beds, and death beds, who have to be taught to go out of themselves to Christ, in whom alone they can have peace, instead of being taught to do something in themselves to obtain it, and enjoy it:—and the other is improper as a petition at that throne of grace, where our words are to be few and well ordered. It is safest to lay them aside.

ART. IV. *The Life of Mr. John Livingston, minister of the gospel; written by himself during his banishment for the cause of Christ.*

The generation among whom we live, are characterised by a very high opinion of themselves. It is a common idea, that we are superior to all past ages; not only in arts and sciences, but also in true religion. We come to this conclusion, however, in the way of "measuring ourselves by ourselves; and comparing ourselves among ourselves." But the apostle says they who do so are not wise; it would therefore be of good service if we could have some of those characters brought before us, who have lived in former times; and especially those who were engaged in the various struggles for the purity of religion in the land of our fathers, (for they in particular are now by many looked down upon,) that we might compare ourselves with them. And if we do so *wisely* and honestly, we shall see, that instead of being superior, we are far behind them. Your pages have lately presented us one interesting example of this kind in the Memoirs of Mrs. Campbell; and also some extracts from the Life and Times of John Livingston; which latter must be so interesting to every lover of practical piety, and so much to the point, that I presume it will not be thought amiss to insert it entire as written by himself. Mr. Livingston was born about the commencement of the seventeenth century; and lived through that eventful and trying period during the reign of James VI., Charles I., the Interregnum, and a great part of the reign of Charles II., by whom he was banished; he suffered much for religion through his whole life; and being a public character, and personally engaged in many of the great public proceedings of the time, his life gives us a view, not only of one exercised Christian, but also of the general state of religion and public affairs.

D. G.

My father was Mr. William Livingston, first minister at Monybrock,* where he entered in the year 1600, and thereafter was transported about the year 1614, to be minister at Lanerk, where he died in the year 1641; being sixty-five years old. His father was Mr. Alex. Livingston, also at Monybrock, who was a near relation to the house of Calendon. His father was killed at Pinkiefield, in the year 1541, being a soldier of my Lord Livingston's regiment, who afterwards was dignified to be Earl of Linlithgow. My father was straight and zealous in the work of Reformation; and for his non-submission to the canons and ceremonies, was deposed and deprived of his ministry, both at Monybrock, and also at Lanerk. My mother was Agnes Livingston, daughter of Alexander Livingston, portioner of C——, of the house of Dumpace. She was a rare pattern of godliness and virtue; she died in the year 1617, being about thirty-two years of age. She left three sons and four daughters. I was born in Monybrock, in Stirlingshire, June 21, 1603. The first period of my life, I reckon from my birth till the day I first preached in public, which was in January, 1625.

* The same that is called Kilsyth.

Having at home learned to read and write, I was sent in the year 1613, to Stirling, to a Latin School, with Mr. William Wallace, a good man and a learned humanity schoolmaster; where I staid till the summer of 1617, at which time I was sent for, to be present with my mother dying. In October, the same year, I was sent to the college of Glasgow, where I staid four years: I passed Master of Arts, July, 1621. After that I staid in my father's till I began to preach. During this time I observed the Lord's great goodness, that I was born of such parents, who taught me somewhat of God, so soon as I was capable of understanding any thing. I had great fears about my salvation, when I was very young; I had the advantage of the acquaintance and example of many gracious Christians, who used to resort to my father's house, especially at communion occasions; such as Mr. Robert Bruce, and several other godly ministers, the rare Countess of Wigtoun, Lady Lillias Graham, who also at my baptism desired my name, because her father, her husband and eldest son were all of that name; the Lady Culross, the Lady Bamton, and sundry others. It is remarkable, that Mr. William Wallace came but a short while to Stirling before I was sent thither to school; and the year after I left the school, he also left that charge; likewise worthy Mr. Robert Boyd of Throckbridge, was but lately come from Saumure in France, to be principal in the college of Glasgow when I went there, and went from the college the year after I left it. The while I was in Stirling, Mr. Patrick Simpson was minister there; a man learned, godly, and very faithful in the cause of God; and in Glasgow I heard Mr. John Bell, a grave, serious man; and Mr. Robert Scot, who also was once deposed for opposing the corruptions of the time. The first year I went to Stirling school, I profitted not much, and was often beaten by the schoolmaster; and it happened that one day, when he had beaten me on the cheek with a stick, so that it swelled; that same day my father came occasionally to town, and seeing my face swollen, chode with the master, that he had a chief hand to bring him to that place, and should he use me so? The master promised to forbear beating of me, and I profitted a great deal more in my learning after that; and when, about Sept. 1616, I with the rest of my equals, had gone through all the Latin and Greek that was taught in the school, and so was ready to go to the college, and my father came to bring me home for that end; the schoolmaster prevailed with my father, I being so young, and the master having hopes of my proficiency, that I should stay yet one other year, and thus another boy and I stayed another year. We for the most part read by ourselves in a little chamber above the school, the master furnishing us books, where we read the most part of the choice Latin writers, both poets and others, and that year was to me the most profitable year I had at the schools, only in my third year at the college of Glasgow, I think I read more than I did any year since; I was then under the oversight of Mr. Robert Blair, who for two years was my regent. Having gotten some grounding in the logics and metaphysics, and the subtleties of the schoolmen, a vain desire to be above my equals, prompted me to more diligence. In many things, whereunto my mind was very bent, the Lord often disappointed me, and always to my greater advantage. After I had passed my degrees in the college, I had a great mind to the study of the classics, and therefore was desirous to spend some time as a Regent in the college, and for that end, a place being vacant in the college of Glasgow, I studied hard, and prepared to dispute for the place; but when the time came, I heard that one, without any dispute, was placed. Because in the winter of my last year at the college, I had been long detained under surgeons, with a fistula in my leg, in which time Mr. R. Boyd had taught the rest of my class some Hebrew; being grieved at that loss, I began in my father's house, by my private study, to attain some knowledge of the Hebrew, which thereafter by time, I somewhat increased.—I do not remember the time or means particularly, whereby the Lord at first wrought upon my heart; when I was very young, I would sometimes pray with some feeling, and read the word with delight; but thereafter did often intermit any such exercise; I would have some challenges, and begin, and again intermit. I remember the first time that ever I communicated at the Lord's table, was at Stirling, when I was at school, where sitting at the table, and Mr. Patrick Simpson exhorting before the distribution, there came such a trembling on me, that all my body shook, yet thereafter, the fear and trembling departed, and I got some comfort and assurance.—I had no inclination to the ministry, till a year or more after I had passed my degrees in the college, and that upon this occasion, I had a great desire to give myself to the knowledge and practice of medicine, I was very earnest to go to France for that purpose, and propounded it to my father, that I might obtain his consent, but he refused the same. Also about the same time, my father having before purchased some land in the parish of Monybrock, the rights whereof were taken in my name, and that land by ill neighbors, being in a manner laid waste, and Sir William Livingston, of Kilsyth, one of the lords of session, being very desirous to buy that land, that he might build a burgh of barony upon it at Burnside, my father propounded to me that I should go and dwell on the land and marry; but finding that that course would divert me from all study of learning, I refused that offer, and rather agreed to the selling of it,

though I was not yet of age to ratify the sale. Now being in these straits, I resolved that I would spend a day alone before God, and knowing of a secret cave on the south side of Mouse-water, a little above the house of Jerviswood, over against Clegorwood, I went thither, and after many to's and fro's, and much confusion, and fear about the state of my soul, I thought it was made out to me, that I behoved to preach Christ Jesus, which if I did not, I should have no assurance of salvation. Upon this I laid aside all thoughts of France, and medicine, and land, and betook me to the study of divinity. I was from my infancy bred with an aversion to episcopacy and ceremonies. While I was in the college of Glasgow in the year 1619, being as I think, the first year that kneeling at the communion was brought in there, I being with two or three more of the young men at the college, set down among the people at the table, and Mr. James Law the pretended Bishop of Glasgow coming to celebrate the communion, he urged all the people to fall down and kneel; some did so, we sat still; he came to us, commanding us to kneel or to depart; somewhat I spoke to him, but do not remember perfectly what I said, it was to this purpose; *there was no warrant for kneeling, and for want of it, we ought not to be excommunicated from the table of the Lord.* He caused some of the people about us to rise that we might have place to remove, which we did. The next day the Principal, Mr. Robert Boyd, called me to him and said, within two or three weeks, he would celebrate the communion at Govan, for he was minister at Govan, and desired me that whom I knew to be well affected of the young men of the college, I would bring with me to him; although he was a man of sour-like disposition and carriage, I always found him so kind and familiar as made me wonder; sometimes he would call me with other three or four, and lay down books before us, and have us sing tunes of music, wherein he took great delight. The first christian acquaintance and society whereby I got any benefit, was with a religious gentleman William Cunningham, tutor of Bonnytown, who used to be oft at my father's house; several times he and John Weir, of Stockbridges, Alexander Tenant, James Weir, George Mathew, and David Mathew, who were packmen, would meet in my chamber in Lanerk, where we used to spend some time in conference and prayer.

The second period of my life, I reckon from the time I preached in public, till the time I was settled in the ministry in Killinchie in Ireland, for having begun to preach in January 1625, I continued in my father's house in Lanerk, and for the space of a year and a half or some more, I studied there, and preached sometimes there, and sometimes in neighboring kirks, during which time I wrote all my sermons before I preached them, word by word, till one day being to preach after the communion of Quodquan, and having in readiness only a sermon which I had preached one day before in another kirk, and perceiving several to be at Quodquan, who had been at the other kirk, I resolved to choose a new text, and having but little time, wrote only some notes of the heads I was to deliver, yet I found at that time, more assistance in the enlarging of these points, and more motion in my own heart, than ever I had found before, and after that I never wrote all at length, but only notes. About April, 1626, I was sent for by my lord Kenmure to come to Galloway, in reference to a call to the parish of Anwoth, which at that time was not a parish by itself, but a part of another, neither had a church builded; they offered before August next, to have it disjoined, a church build and a stipend settled, and desired that I would stay there in the mean time. I was not willing to stay at that time, there being no appearance that I could preach in the mean time; therefore they desired, if they got these things performed before August, that upon a call I would return thereunto; I condescended, but some difficulties coming in the way, they got not these things so soon done, and therefore in harvest first I hearkened to a call to Trophichen; but thereafter the Lord provided a great deal better for them, for they got that worthy servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. Samuel Rutherford, whose praise is in all the reformed churches; and I observed afterwards, that several parishes whereunto I had a motion of a call were disappointed, either by obstruction from the Bishops, or thereafter by the General Assemblies refusing to transport; yet these parishes were far better provided; for Leith got Mr. David Forest, Kircaldy got Mr. Robert Douglass, Claspog got precious Mr. James Durham; Antrim, in Ireland, got Mr. Archibald Fergusson, Newton there got Mr. John Grey, and Killinchie there got Mr. Michael Bruce. The short time I was in Galloway, I got acquaintance with my lord Kenmure and his religious lady and several worthy experienced Christians, as Alexander Gordon, of Earlstoun, Alexander Gordon of Knockgray, Alexander Gordon of Knockbrack, John his brother, Alexander Gordon of Garlurk, John Gordon of Barskeach, the laird of Carloun, Tultertown, John M'Adam and Christian M'Barn of Waterhead, Marion M'Naught in Kerkubright, and several others, for I preached at a communion in Borgue, where were many good people that came out of Kirkubright, and was at some private meetings with some of the forementioned in Garlurk, and in the Airds, where Earlstoun then dwelt. In harvest 1626, I was desired by my lord Trophichen, to come to his house in Calder, and being desired by the aged minister of Trophichen, to preach there. Af-

ter two or three weeks, Presbytery of Linlithgow kept a visitation in that church, where I got a joint call by the parish and Presbytery, and the old minister, and by my lord Trophichen, patron of the parish, and master of the land, to be minister there.—The old minister died within a month or two; I preached there a whole year, and found several times the Lord's presence with me in preaching, other than I had done before. Means were used by the parish and the lord Trophichen, that I might be ordained.—The Presbytery, though some of them were but corrupt men, showed themselves willing thereunto: but Mr. John Spotswood, pretended Bishop of St. Andrews, stopt all, because of my nonconformity; and when the earl of Linlithgow, lord Trophichen and some others, dealt with him on my behalf, (for even at that time some few by *moyen** were suffered to enter into the ministry without conformity) he pretended that notwithstanding of my nonconformity, he should not hinder my entrance in some other place; but that was promised to one Mr. George Hanna, who thereafter was intruded upon that poor people; and the report went, that either Mr. George, or his brother Mr. James, had given the bishop, or some about him, five hundred merks Scots, to get that place. This opposition and fear of disappointment, made the people more desirous to hear the word; and this desire to hear, I thought made, that the Lord furnished the more to be preached to them, especially toward the end; for about October, 1627, the Presbytery of Linlithgow wrote to me, to desist from preaching any more at Trophichen, and I found the two or three last sabbaths I preached there, the sweetest sabbaths, though sorrowful, that I had seen in that place. When I was thus forced to leave Trophichen, and was resolved to return to my father's house in Lanerk, and had only gone to take my leave of my uncle William Livingston in Falkirk, being anxious about the care of Trophichen, and my own want of employment, when I had sent away before me to Lanerk the boy that waited on me and kept my horse, being minded within half an hour to follow, I got letters from the Countess of Wigtoun from Cumbernauld, (that was six miles distant) desiring that I would come thither, to be present with her mother, the Countess of Linlithgow, who was dying, and had been all her days a papist, but some while before had deserted that religion. When I came thither, the Earl of Wigtoun and she proposed, that (seeing their house was six miles from their parish, and several of their tenants might come and hear sermons in their house; and that it was but ten or twelve miles from Trophichen, and so some of them also might come) I would stay with them, and at least in the winter time, preach in the hall of Cumbernauld to the family and such as came, until other occasion of employment offered; whereunto I condescended. Thus until August, 1630, at which time I went to Ireland, I continued more than two years and a half, most part in the house of the Earl of Wigtoun, and sometimes with my father in Lanerk. Most part of these summers I was travelling from place to place, according as I got invitations to preach, and especially at communions in Lanerk, Irvine, New-mills, Kenniel, Culross, Larber, and the Spots, and several other places; I preached sometimes also at Glasgow for Mr. Robert Scot. He died Jan. 23, 1629. I was with him several times on his death bed. One time in presence of many, speaking of the bishops and ceremonies, he said, "Their wicked and corrupt courses my soul abhors, and my comfort is that God hath withheld me from them; if God lengthen my days, I shall not be so sparing as I have been, to gain ease, I have dishonored God." And a little before his death, having lain some time in a kind of trance, he awaked, and taking off his night cap, threw it to the bed foot, and cried out, "I have now seen the Lord, and heard him say—make way for my faithful servant Mr. Robert Scot." And after a short while he died.

(To be continued.)

ART. V. *The Christian Minister's Soliloquy.*

MR. EDITOR,

Thinking the following extract will be very acceptable to many of your readers, and even useful, especially to pious ministers, I transcribe it for insertion in the Monitor; having it by me in manuscript, I know not at present the print from which it is taken.

D.

"My glorious and condescending Lord, who has endowed mankind with a wise variety of capacities, and assigned to each of them his proper work, agreeably to the various exigencies, they inhabit, has appointed me the most pleasant work, the work of love and benevolence. He only requires of me, to act the friend of human

* Forbearance, or connivance.

nature, and shew myself a lover of souls—souls whom he loves, and whom he deemed with the blood of his heart—souls, whom his Father loves, and for whom he gave up his own Son unto death—souls, whom my fellow-servants of a superior order, the blessed angels love, and to whom they concur with me in ministering—souls, precious in themselves, and of more value than the whole material universe—souls, that must be happy or miserable in the highest degree throughout an immortal duration—souls, united to me by the endearing ties of our common humanity—souls, for whom I must give an account to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls—souls, whom none hate, but the malignant ghosts of hell, and those fallen spirits who are under their influence on earth. Angels! can I help loving these dear souls? Why does not my heart always glow with affection and zeal for them? O! why am I such a languid friend, when the love of my Master and his Father is so ardent; when the ministers of heaven are flaming fires of love, though they do not share of the same nature? And when the objects of my love are so precious and valuable. The owners of these souls often do not love them. Shall not love then invigorate my hand to pluck them out of the burning? Yes, I will, I must love them. But O to love them more! Glow my zeal! Kindle my affections! Speak my tongue, flow my blood! Be exerted all my powers. Be my life a sacrifice, if necessary to save souls from death! Let labor be a pleasure; let difficulties appear glorious and inviting in this service. O! thou God of love, kindle a flame of love in this cold heart of mine, and then I shall perform my work with alacrity and success."

ART. VI. Congregationalism in the Presbyterian Church.

The peace of the church is unquestionably a precious blessing, for the preservation of which, *personal* sacrifices, to almost any extent, ought to be made. But the truth of God and the order of his house must not be sacrificed, even for the preservation of peace. Professor M. fully agrees with us in this; but he seems to think that all important differences in the Presbyterian church may be reconciled, without a division. If this can be effected, none will rejoice in such an event, if we live to witness it, more than ourselves. But we solemnly protest against the late fashionable method of settling differences by *compromise*; that is, by letting those who teach false doctrine, and violate their ordination engagements, and disregard the order of the Presbyterian church at pleasure, take their course, with only saying what amounts to this—"it were well, dear brethren, if you would be a little more careful of what you say and do," and then declaring that they are no longer to be disturbed by those to whom they have been opposed. We have had more than enough of such *reconciliations* as this already.

And when we consider how numerous and important are the existing differences, even if we take into view only those which relate to the topics on which Professor M. has dwelt in his letters—how strong are the attachments of the parties who differ to the things about which they differ; how prostrate the discipline of the church has become, especially in regard to discipline for unsoundness in the faith; and how deeply and generally our church is imbued with the spirit of Congregationalism—we confess that we almost despair of seeing *real concord* restored, while our church is composed of such heterogeneous materials.

We feel constrained to say, that we think professor M. is in an extreme, in the indulgence of his fears of the evils that may ensue from a disturbance of the peace of the church. He seems to be horrified at the very thought of it. Let us not forget that the Bible is full of examples, of the testimony which the decided friends of God's truth and ordinances have borne in their favor, in the face of prevailing degeneracy; and this, although the peace of the church might be disturbed, and frequently was, in fact, greatly disturbed, by what they said and did. The history of the ancient prophets, of our blessed Saviour himself, and of his holy apostles, is in great part, the history of their conflicts with the corruptors of the church of God, and the disturbance of the false peace in which it had settled down. The prophet Jeremiah, after lamenting in the most pathetic strains the state of the church in his day, mentions among the worst evidences of its corruption, that those, from whom decision in favor of reformation might have been expected, were "not valiant for the truth upon the earth;" our Saviour declared that he "came not to send peace but a sword;" the apostle Paul had a constant conflict with false teachers and false brethren. In regard to the latter he says, "to whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour;" and why not? The answer is "that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." Of false teachers he hesitates not to declare, "I would they were even cut off that trouble you." The apostle John enjoins, "If there come any unto you and bring not

this doctrine [the doctrine of Christ] receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed"—Why so sternly repulsive?—For a very sufficient reason—"he that bid-
deth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." Nearly the whole of the short epistle of Jude consists of a warning and of fearful denunciations against false teachers; and he tells the churches, "it was needful for me to write unto you, and to exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." At the time of the Protestant reformation, there was a great cry against disturbing the peace of the church. But had this been regarded by Luther, Zuingli, Calvin, Cranmer, and Knox, what what would have become of the *real* church of Christ? It might still have been slumbering in the corruptions of the Man of sin. What if the heroic Scotch Presbyterians, and the devoted English Puritans, had succumbed to those who wished and admonished them not to disturb the peace of the church?—There might have been no Presbyterian and Congregational churches at this day in the United States.

It is manifest then, that there are occasions on which it is indispensably incumbent on the friends of pure evangelical truth and gospel order, and most of all incumbent on the ministers of Christ, who are "set for the defence of the gospel," to disturb the peace of the church—so far as it will be disturbed by standing up, and standing firmly for the truth of God and his sacred institutions. The only question is, whether such an occasion exists at present in the Presbyterian church. If we did not most solemnly believe that it does, no consideration on earth (God helping us by his grace) should induce us to take the course we have been pursuing for three years past. Often have we been tempted and strongly inclined to shrink away from it. Often have we sought counsel of God. Often have we asked ourselves—what if we should be called to our last account—not an improbable event at our age—in the midst of what we are doing and writing? The result has been, that while we have been sensible of great imperfection in all we have done, we have believed that our *course itself* has been, and is, the right course; and we have not dared to abandon it. But for this, we should long since have been silent. We were, in fact, almost silent, for a year after the General Assembly of 1832. But we have been constrained to break our silence. If we are naturally prone to controversy, it was long before the propensity showed itself. We were about forty years in the ministry, before we ever wrote a sentence of polemicks, or were engaged in serious religious controversy of any kind. We have always hated it, and we still hate it. But in opposition to our reluctance, it is our purpose, in reliance on divine aid, to maintain, as far as our feeble powers will permit, our part of the struggle in which the best friends of the Presbyterian church are now engaged, for the preservation of her purity and her *eventual* restoration to solid peace—till we either see a favourable issue of the conflict, or death, or some other dispensation of the providence of God, shall manifestly decide that we have fulfilled our part of a sacredly incumbent duty.—*Dr. Green's Chr. Advocate.*

ART. VII. *Modern Errors in the Church—No. I.*

That the present aspect of the Reformed Churches offers to our consideration a serious and affecting subject is undeniable. To a scrutinizing Christian observer, "the signs of the times" unfold a remarkable analogy to that early period, when by the domination of inordinate wealth, and the accession of Antichristian power, Constantine unwittingly poured poison into all the veins of the nominal churches.

The accession of worldly riches, dignity, and influence attracted within the boundaries of the church, multitudes of unregenerate men, who filled all the offices, from which corrupting measures, dreadful errors flowed; and by the reaction, desolated the christian community, with heresy, superstition, and formality, until every vestige of spiritual worship and vital godliness almost disappeared.

All persons who are intimately conversant with the ecclesiastical history of the fourth and fifth centuries know, that the prominent departures from Evangelical truth consisted in that denial of the agency of the Holy Ghost, which is indissolubly connected with the Arian principles; and as a necessary consequence in the assertion of the full ability of man unassisted by divine influence to comply with the commands of God; from which followed as an essential adjunct, the dogma that man enters the world a sinless and undepraved being.

These features combine a graphical delineation of the prevalent corruptions in theory and practice at that period. It is not necessary now to enter upon an investigation, whether these positions are derived from the scriptures of truth; as my present essay is only preliminary, and intended to point out the remarkable similitude between the preceding and the present era. In another point of view, the circumstances are alike. Great varieties of opinions were maintained upon these important doctrines, some continuing to exemplify the marvellous inconsistency of "holding the head," while they

also wished to connect with it, "the rudiments of the world," and others diverging by every "by path," wandered away, some more and others less widely, into the grounds which environ Doubting Castle.

There were temporizers like Arius himself who affirmed, denied, explained, and darkened "counsel by words without knowledge," exactly as hope, fear, loss or gain at the time swayed; and there were bolder sinners, who rejected more of the restraints imposed by "the belief of the truth;" and there were more decided men, who, like Pelagius, when he discovered that he had a sufficient number of adherents, openly announced those strong delusions, which in truth nullify the whole of Christian revelation.

This eventful and appalling condition of the church, it is believed, is rapidly returning; and unless objects are beheld through a distorted medium, it also appears evident, that the lamentable causes are the same, as well as the prospective mischievous results.

Every student of ecclesiastical history knows, that the immediate consequence of Constantine's decrees, by which the church was endowed with splendor, opulence and power, was this; it introduced among Christians, not a publicly avowed, but a secretly operating propensity, to be conformed to the world. Thus it erased from their minds and hearts that fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, and that solicitude for the Redeemer's approbation, which ought to be the sole governing motive of every believer in Jesus. If this be not one of the most clearly discernable characteristics, which mark the present generation of many of the professed disciples of Christ, then there is no certain criterion by which men can be accurately judged.

Now we know that this spirit and tendency to compromise with the world are altogether deleterious. In coalitions of this nature, the parties never advance with even step, so that at last the dividing line between the sons of God and the servants of Mammon, has become imperceptible, even through the largest magnifying glass which the ingenuity of gospel faith can possibly invent. But the Christian backsliders go the whole distance from the domains of the sanctuary to the temple of the god of this world; and from the land of Canaan to the darkness and degradation of Egyptian bondage. It is in vain to extenuate, or justify this departure from the living God, as the apostle Paul saith, Hebrews, iii. 12, 14, it is an evil heart of unbelief, hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Another circumstance in the comparison of the church fourteen centuries ago, and at this day is most impressive. The abhorrent heresies which God mysteriously permitted, and hitherto irretrievably, to become a noisome pestilence to the church, were gradually introduced, and so cautiously and craftily that they were scarcely noticed, until the disease was altogether incurable by the most skilful spiritual physicians.

This is most exactly descriptive of some of the facts which have passed before our own eyes.

Many persons are living who can recollect when doctrines which are now proclaimed as orthodox, would not for one moment have been tolerated. An instance of this kind occurs to my remembrance. Little more than twenty years ago, an avowed Arminian preacher was menaced with a denunciation before the Baltimore Methodist Conference for promulgating heresy condemned by the articles of their church; but the Pelagian corruptions mingled with his errors would escape notice by the side of many of the deceptive dogmas constantly preached in some of the professedly Calvinistic pulpits in this city and elsewhere. During the last twenty-five years, the enemy has been sowing his semi-Arian and semi-Pelagian tares, until they are so completely intermixed with the wheat, that no ingenuity and efforts of man seem sufficiently potent to counteract their diffusion; and nothing less than the power and grace of the Most High God can eradicate their noxious seed and their pestilential fruits.—*Christian Intelligencer*.

ART. VIII. Doctrinal Differences in the Presbyterian Church.

As Professor Miller says, "I cannot allow myself to doubt that a very large majority,—nay, nineteen-twentieths of the whole number of our ministers are sufficiently near to the Scriptures and to each other, in respect to all the essentials of truth, to be comfortably united in Christian fellowship and co operation;" and as we have expressed a very different opinion, we feel disposed to state distinctly, from our accredited standards, certain articles of faith, which seem to us to be essential, and which, notwithstanding, are openly impugned and rejected by preachers and writers in the Presbyterian church, without any efficient discipline being applied to correct and prevent the evil.

In speaking of "essential truths," we observe that Professor Miller mentions those which are "sufficiently near to the Scriptures." This is the favorite language of

those who do not in their hearts approve of our Confession of Faith, and Catechisms—of those who do not like what Professor M. has ably and conclusively written and published, to show that the very design of our doctrinal standards is to make known *how we understand* the Scriptures: and which, be it remembered, is the understanding that every man who is licensed, or ordained in the Presbyterian church, solemnly declares to be his own. The advocates and propagators of unsound doctrine always profess to go right to the Scriptures—they sometimes even glory in not being trammelled or restrained by any frame work raised around the Bible. They well understand, that if they can be allowed to put their own licentious construction on the language of Scripture, the field is open for endless controversy, and for advocating any heresy which they may choose to adopt. They forget—we will say *they remember to forget*—that they have already told the churches how they do, or did, understand the Scriptures: that this understanding was the ground of their admission into the church: that if they abandon this ground they ought also to abandon the church: and that they violate their most solemn engagements, while they keep their standing in the church, and yet set at nought the terms on which that standing was given them, and by which alone they can with good faith retain it.

But although Professor M. has used the language, we have no suspicion that he has adopted the principles of the latitudinarians.[*] We are satisfied that he believes with us, that the whole authority of our public Formularies is derived from the sacred Scriptures; that if they were not a just exposition of the leading truths of the word of God, they would have, and ought to have, no authority at all; but as they do soundly expound, and clearly set forth, the doctrines of the holy oracles, in such a manner as to discriminate truth from the endless errors which men of corrupt minds have professed to derive from the volume of inspiration, these Formularies, taken in the obvious sense which their language bears, are solemnly obligatory on every minister of the Presbyterian church. In an argument with Professor M., therefore, it is fair for us to take our acknowledged standards as exhibiting “the essential truths of Scripture,” as held both by him and by us.

In chap. iii. sec. vi. of our Confession of Faith, we find the following article: “As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted and sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, sanctified and saved, but the elect only.” The framers of this article appear to have intended it as a *summary* of doctrines, to be afterwards explained more at large, and have placed it under the general title of “God’s eternal decrees.” We take it for the very same reason that its authors composed it—as containing a summary; and one that exhibits at a single view, the most of the important points that are now impugned by teachers and writers in the Presbyterian church. We mean also to add, from the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, a portion of what they contain on each of the topics, in the general statement.

As we intend to state no points which we have not, with our own eyes or ears, seen or heard publicly opposed or denied, and which, but for the space it would occupy, and the labor of transcription it would require, we should like to quote in the very language of the impugners, we shall not dwell on the doctrine of particular election. We do not recollect to have seen or heard a *direct* denial of this point, among the clergymen of our church; although of the laity we know that not a few make no hesitation in rejecting it avowedly and utterly; and although many clergymen do actually contend against doctrines, which by fair implication necessarily involve that of particular election. The Methodists have had considerable success, in some parts of our church, in inculcating their notions on the private members of our communion; and it is well if a number of our clergy also are not tainted with their sentiments in regard to election, as we know they are on the subject of human ability.

I. Then, the elect, and of course the whole human race, have “fallen in Adam.” The Confession of Faith, chap. v. sec. 4, says, “The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men,†—yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature and not from God, who be-

[* We have very strong suspicions that Dr. M. “has adopted” in no inconsiderable degree, “the principles of the latitudinarians.” This article, to say nothing of the whole tenor of his letters, proves that he *teaches* latitudinarian principles. And we know not why Dr. M. should be charged with teaching principles, which he has not adopted.—ED. MORRIS.]

† We shall make our quotations by connecting only the clauses which bear on the points we touch. We shall endeavor in no instance, to mutilate or vary the sense; and of this our readers will be able readily to judge for themselves, by the distinct references we shall always make.

ing most holy and righteous, neither is, nor can be, the author or approver of sin." On this point we shall depart from our general course, and make a quotation, which we think—although we do not say or believe that the writer himself thinks—directly contravenes the above important doctrine of our standards. A professor of a theological seminary in the Presbyterian church, has made a publication in the form of letters, in which he says, (p. 4,) "God is properly the author of that which is produced or brought about by his direct agency, the nature of which he approves, without any free agency coming between his agency and the event, so as to produce it." And again, (p. 3,) he says, "Then according to Scripture and sound philosophy, to God alone belongs causation, and he alone is uncaused. While he is the HOLY EFFICIENT CAUSE of all our thoughts and volitions, there is no agent between him and these effects, causing them, and producing them. But before God could be the author of sin, his agency and causation must include an approbation of sin, and so he sinful; to suppose which would be blasphemy." Thus it appears, according to this theological Professor, that the difference between God's being the author of sin, and the efficient cause of sin, lies wholly in this—that the former terms imply God's approbation of sin and the latter terms do not imply it, but leave room to maintain that he utterly disapproves of it. The position is, that sinful thoughts and volitions, are creatures of God's own immediate production, which he utterly disapproves; that is, he forms, by his sole and direct efficiency, creatures which he hates the moment they are formed. It would be blasphemy to say that he loved these creatures, at any instant after he has formed them; but it is sound philosophy and theology to say, that he hates these creatures of his immediate efficient power, from the very birth of their being. Now, in our humble opinion, this distinction between an "author" of a thing, and the "efficient cause" of that thing, is what no one would make or understand, without some sapient professor to teach him. To us it seems to be a distinction without a difference. And we have no doubt that whoever should say, without an explanation, that God is the immediate efficient cause of sinful thoughts and volitions, would be understood, by every one acquainted with the English language, and who has not heard of this theological system, as affirming unequivocally, that God is the author of sin. We once heard a man say, when a strange thing was mentioned, it takes such things as that to make some of all sorts. And so it is, in the variety of theological notions now afloat in the Presbyterian church—it takes such a system as the one we have just mentioned, to make up the assortment. Yet when the Executive Committee of the Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church, refused to commission two young preachers who, it was well ascertained, had imbibed the sentiments above exhibited, they received a letter of severe reprimand from the teacher of those hopeful youth, and were threatened with a complaint to the General Assembly. Nor was the threat an idle one—the complaint was made, and very seriously discussed; and although the Committee at length escaped without censure, yet so also did the complainant. Nor have we ever heard, and do not believe, that this system of theological instruction has ever met reproof, from any judicatory in the Presbyterian Church.—*Dr. Green's Review of Dr. Miller's "Letters to Presbyterians."*

ART. VI. *Correspondence between the Lords and Commons in the Parliament in England, and the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; also between said Assembly and the Assembly of Divines met at Westminster, 1643—1648.*

(Continued from page 201.)

Letter from the assembly of Divines in the Kingdom of England, to the right Reverend the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Right Reverend and dearly beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ.—We the Assembly of Divines and others, called and now sitting by authority of both Houses of Parliament, to be consulted by them in matters of religion; have received from the honorable Houses of Commons, a special order (dated the 3d of this instant August) recommending it to us to write a letter to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, taking notice of the pious and good expeditions to this Church and State, certified in the late answer of the Commissioners of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, from their meeting at Edinburgh the 17th of July 1643. And further to desire them to possess the people of that kingdom with our condition; and to encourage them to our assistance in this cause of religion. And having with that order received and read the answer directed to the honorable Houses of the Parliament of England, we cannot sufficiently express the great content and comfort, unto which it hath raised us, in the midst of the sad and calamitous condition under which we lie.

It is no small refreshing to our mourning spirits to confide, that yet our God hath not left us wholly comfortless, nor cast us so far out of his sight, as having made us sick with smiting that should be verified of us, *Lover and friend hast thou put far from us, and that no man*

should turn aside to ask how we do : but that we find so many of the churches of Christ, and above them all, our dearest brethren of Scotland, so far to take to heart our extremities, as to sit in the dust with us, and so to look upon our adversities, as being themselves also in the body.

And as we cannot render thanks sufficient unto our God for remembering such merey in the midst of so much wrath; so we embrace with all cheerfulness this opportunity of thankful acknowledgement of the great debt which your love doth continually lay upon, not us alone, but upon this whole kingdom, in the free and full expressions of your care, piety and zeal, and of like affections of that whole nation, to assist and concur with the Parliament here, by all good and lawful means, for settling of religion in godly unity and uniformity throughout all his Majesty's dominions, against all the designs, power and malice of bloody Papists, and the prelatical faction, with all their malignant adherents, the common enemies of reformation, truth and peace.

We are likewise much engaged to the great vigilance and travels of the honorable Convention of the Estates of Scotland, in contributing their brotherly advice, and for their readiness to give assistance for recovering and settling the peace of this kingdom, against the devices, power and practices of the enemies of religion, and the public good, whereof some hints are given in that answer, and of which we doubt not but the honorable Houses of Parliament will be so sensible as to give such a return as becomes them; for they, better knowing than we do, the depth of the evils under which this Nation now groaneth, and the further dangers imminent, will be more able to value and improve the great affection and wisdom of their brethren, in points of so high and general concernment, for the safety and glory of the king's majesty, and of all his kingdoms, and are more fit to take notice of advices of that kind, in reference to the civil state, which therefore we wholly leave with them.

But as for the many prudent, pious, and seasonable admonitions which concern our assembly, the good Lord reward (for we cannot) seven fold into your bosoms all the good, which you have labored to procure unto the house of our God, and blessed be his name who hath put such a thing as this into the hearts of our Parliament, to cleanse the house of the Lord of all the uncleanness that is in it, by impure doctrine, worship, or discipline.

Nor can we in the depth of all our sufferings and sorrows, withhold our hearts from rejoicing in the wonderful goodness of God toward this kingdom, in that he hath let us see the gracious fruit of your effectual prayers and tears, as well as of our own endeavors this way : In bringing together this assembly, although in a very troublous time, whereby we may have better opportunity, more fully to pour out our souls jointly and together to our God, for healing of this now miserable church and nation : To consider thoroughly, for what more especially the land mourneth, and how we may be most useful to our great God and master Jesus Christ. In contributing somewhat to the vindicating of his precious truth, many ways corrupted through the craft of men that have lain in wait to deceive. In the seeking out of a right way of worshipping our God according to his own heart : In promoting the power of godliness, in the hearts and lives of all his people, and in laying forth such a discipline as may be most agreeable to God's holy word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of this church at home, and nearer agreement with the church of Scotland (highly honored by us) and other the best reformed churches abroad, that so, to the utmost of our power, we may exalt him that is the only Lord over the church, his own house, in all his offices, and present this church as a chaste virgin unto Christ.

It is a timely and favorite prayer which you have put up at the throne of grace, touching the due managing of the proceedings in this assembly, and that with straight intentions we may all seek the truth in every thing, which by the blessing of God upon our labors, must needs produce all those blessings which your worthy commissioners mention. And now, for your comfort as well as our own encouragement, we desire you to take notice of the gracious answer of the God that heareth prayer, unto your fervent cries. For beside our own particular addresses and secret vows to our God to be faithful (with disdain of all baits of avarice and ambition) it hath pleased the Divine Providence so to direct both the honorable Houses of Parliament, to take care of preventing all obliquity in our proceedings, and to stop the mouths of all that watch for their and our haltings, and are apt maliciously to traduce both, (as if we were so restrained by them, in our votes and resolutions, as to be bound up to the sense of others, and to carry on private designs in a servile way) that the houses have tendered to us, and we have most readily taken a solemn and serious protestation in the presence of Almighty God, to maintain nothing in this assembly touching doctrine, but what we are persuaded in our consciences to be the truth; nor in matters of discipline, but what we conceive to conduce most to the glory of God, and the good and peace of his church; which doth not only secure the members against fettering of their judgements or votes, but engage them to the use of all freedom, becoming the integrity of conscience, the weight of the cause, the gravity and honor of such an assembly. It is likewise a great consolation, that our God hath put it into your hearts to design some godly and learned brethren to put in their sickles with us into this harvest, which is so great, and requires so many laborers; for which, as we heartily return thanks, so we earnestly pray the Lord to open a way to their timely coming hither, and do assure them of all testimonies of respect, love, and the right hand of fellowship, who shall undertake a journey so tedious, and now so perilous, to join with us in the work, when it shall please the honorable Houses of Parliament to invite them thereunto.

It remains that we should now spread before you our calamities, danger and fears of further evils, not only drawing towards us, but even threatening you also; and crave your passionate aids in all ways becoming the servants of Jesus Christ. But your commissioners have so fully declared your certain knowledge and deep sense of them, that they have left us no room for enlarging ourselves in this particular, to brethren so full of bowels and zeal. And they have sufficiently intimated unto the honorable Houses, that you are well aware how often the common enemies of both kingdoms have consulted together with one consent to cut off both

the one and the other from being a nation, and that the tabernacles of *Edom*, and the *Ishmaelites of Moab*, and the *Hagarens, Geball, Annon*, and *Amalek*, the cursed Papists, and their implacable and bloody abettors here, do still retain the same malice and carry on the same design against religion, and perfect reformation, even in your kingdom, happily rescued from their former tyrannies, as well as in this of scorched England, now in the furnace: Only they have varied the scene, pouring out all their fury upon us at the present. That so, having once trodden us under as mire in the streets, they may afterwards more easily, (which God avert) set their proud and impure feet upon your necks also. Wherefore, with the good leave and favor of the honorable Houses of Parliament, we shall now spare the further exciting of you to that which we doubt not of your forwardness by all lawful and meet means to promote with all your might: namely, the possessing the good people of that kingdom, (of whose willing mind and readiness you have already given ample testimony) touching our condition, and to encourage them to our assistance in this cause of religion.

And now remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, with all due acknowledgments of the precious effects of your prayers; we most humbly and earnestly desire, that the same breathings of the spirit in you may still continue, and (if possible) more frequently and fervently ascend to your God, and our God, not only for removal of outward pressures, and the visitation of the sword, that hath already learned to eat much of our flesh, but also for the special assistance and protection of the Father of lights, in this great work unto which we are now called, and wherein we already find many and potent adversaries; that feeling the plummet is now in the hands of our *Zerubbabels*, all mountains may become plains, and they may bring forth the *capstone of the Lords house with shoutings, crying grace, grace unto it*, and that how weak and contemptible builders soever we be, the Lord would enable us to build with them, that none may have cause to despise the day of our small beginnings, nor to stop our progress in the work which he hath given us to do. And as for us, who cannot but take notice of the extraordinary employments unto which you are called in your great Assembly, now also sitting; God forbid that we should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you, that the Lord may enable you to be wise master-builders, preserve your peace always by all means, and make you steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, to the praise of the glory of his grace, and to the further benefit and comfort of the whole church of God, but more especially of this our afflicted ark, now wafted into the midst of a sea of miseries, and tossed with tempests, until our wise and gracious God, by the furtherance of your prayers and brotherly endeavors, shall cause it to rest upon the mountains of *Ararat*, which may take away our fears, as well as put an end to our present sufferings, and give you to rejoice with us, that now mourn for us.

WESTMINSTER, August 4, 1643.

Subscribed by your most loving brethren, highly prising the graces of God in you, and that are your servants for Jesus's sake, in the name of the whole Assembly.—William Tuisse, prolocutor; John White, Cornelius Burges, Assessors; Henry Roborough, Adoniram Byfield, Scribes of the Assembly.

The Assemblies Answer to the right Reverend the Assembly of Divines in the Church of England.

Right Reverend and dearly beloved—As the sufferings of Christ abound in you, so our hearty desire to God is, that your consolations may much more abound by Christ. The perusing of your letter, produced in every one of us such a mixture of affections, as were at the laying of the foundation of the second Temple, where there was heard both shouting for joy, and weeping aloud. We rejoiced that Christ our Lord had at last in that land, created a new thing, in calling together, not as before, of a prelatical convocation to be task-masters over the people of the Lord, but an assembly of godly divines, minding the things of the Lord, whose hearts are set to purge the defiled house of God in that land: yet this, our joy, was not a little allayed by the consideration of the sad and deplorable condition of that kingdom, where the high provocations of so many years, the hellish plots of so many enemies in a nick of time, have brought in an inundation of overflowing calamities. We know you are patiently bearing the indignation of the Lord, because you have sinned against him, till he thoroughly plead your cause, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon, who now laugh among themselves, while you are fed with the bread of tears, and get tears to drink in great measure, being on the mountains like the doves of the vallies, all of you mourning every one for his iniquity.

It is now more than evident to all the Kirks of Christ, with what implacable fury and hellish rage, the blood thirsty Papists, as *Babylon* without, and the prelatical faction, the children of *Edom* within, having adjoined to themselves many malignant adherents, of time-serving Atheists, haters of holiness, rejecters of the yoke of Christ, (to whom the morning light of reformation is as the shadow of death) have begun to swallow up the inheritance of the Lord, and are not easily satisfied in making deep and long furrows on your backs. We cannot say that the loudness of your cry surpasseth the heaviness of your stroke; but though the Lord hath delivered the men, every one into his neighbor's hand, and into the hand of his King, and they have smitten the land, yet the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous. This cloud shall speedily pass away, and a fair sun-shine shall appear.

As for us, though your extreme calamity did not threaten the ruin of our religion, peace, and liberties, as it doth most evidently, we would hate ourselves, if we did not find our hearts within us melting with compassion over you; you are engraven on the tables of our hearts to live and die with you; we could desire that our heads were waters, and our eyes a fountain of tears, that we might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of the Lord's people: So calamitous a condition of any of the Kirks of Christ, could not but be very

grievous unto us ; how much more shall not we stoop and fall down in the dust to embrace our dearest brethren of England, to whom we are tied into near and tender relation. When we were but creeping out of the deep darkness and bondage of Popery, and were almost crushed with the fury of foreign invaders, joined with intestine enemies, pretending the name and warrant of authority, as now your oppressors do ; then did the Lord by your fathers send us reasonable assistance against that intended and begun bondage both of soul and body, the repayment of which debt, the Divine Providence seemeth now to require at our hands. And whereas of late, through our security we had fallen into a woful relapse, and were compassed about with dreadful dangers on all hands, while we aimed at the recovery of our former purity and liberty : then we wanted not the large supply of your fervent prayers, and other brotherly assistance of that nation, while those who are now your malignant enemies, would have swallowed us up.

These strait bonds of your ancient and late love, do so possess our hearts, that when the motions of the commissioners of the honorable Houses of Parliament, and your letters did challenge our advice and aid for defence of religion, and advancement of reformation, our smothered desires for a more strict union and uniformity in religion betwixt both the nations, did break forth into a vehement flame, in such sort, as when the draught of a league and covenant betwixt both kingdoms for defence of religion, &c. was read in open audience, it was so unanimously and heartily embraced, with such a torrent of most affectionate expressions, as none but eye or ear witnesses can conceive, whereof the two reverend divines sent from you to us being then present, no doubt will give you an account. Neither was it so only with us, but also the honorable convention of estates here, with the like harmony of affectionate expressions, did entertain the same ; so that we hope to be real and constant in prosecuting the contents of this covenant. When we in our straits fled to the Lord, and entered into covenant with him, he owned us and our cause, rebuked and dissipated our enemies, and hitherto hath helped us, and blessed our enterprises with success from heaven, notwithstanding our great weakness and unworthiness. We trust in the Lord, that as once it was prophesied of *Israel* and *Judah*, so shall Scotland and England become one stick in the hand of the Lord ; they shall ask the way to *Sion*, with their faces thitherward, saying, come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant, that shall not be forgotten ; and so shall it come to pass, that the Lord's Jerusalem in this Island, shall be a cup of trembling, and a burthensome stone to all their enemies round about. Though now it be the time of *Jacob's* trouble, the Lord will deliver him out of it. Reverend and dear brethren, we conceive your case, and of all the faithfull in that land, to be no other than of a woman crying, travelling in birth, and pained till she be delivered. The great red dragon, (under whose standard the sons of *Belial* are fighting) is your arch enemy. This cannot but be a time of fear and sorrow. But when the male child shall be brought forth, the pain shall cease, and the sorrow shall be forgotten. We are very confident in the Lord, that you will be faithful to Jesus Christ, in the work committed to you by him in all his ordinances, and taking neither foundation, corner-stone, nor any part of the rubbish of *Babel* to build the city that is called, *the Lord is there* : But measuring all with the golden reed of the sanctuary, you may more closely be united to the best reformed Kirks, in doctrine, worship, and government, that you may grow up in him in all things which is the head, even Christ.

And now, Reverend and dear brethren, though we know that you abound in all gifts and graces, the spirit of Jesus Christ being plentifully poured out upon you ; yet according to your desire, and the motion made by the Commissioners of the Honorable Houses of Parliament, to testify our hearty sympathy with you in the work of the Lord. We have nominated and elected some godly and learned of this church, to repair to your assembly. We doubt nothing of your hearty embracing them in the Lord, and their diligent concurrence with you in advancing that great work.

Not only the common danger we are under, but the conscience of our duty to his suffering people, layeth bonds on us frequently to present you, and that blessed work of reformation, in your hands, to the throne of grace, that the God of all grace, who will call you into his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered, and a while may make you perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

EDINBURGH, August 19, 1643.

Subscribed in the name of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by the Clerk of the Assembly.

DR. BROWNLEE'S LETTERS ON THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CONTROVERSY.—The last Christian Intelligencer contains the xxxii. and last letter of this controversy, which the Dr. has ably sustained throughout. The priests having long since left to him the undisputed possession of the field, he has followed up their retreat with a well directed and effectual fire. He has manfully discharged a duty he owed to his Divine Master, to the churches of the Reformation, and to the country. And though the deep apostasy of the times, and the general corruption both in church and state, may in a great measure paralyze their immediate effect, they cannot but be attended with ultimate benefit ; nor will their author go unrewarded for his arduous labor. We cannot see how these letters can be read, by those sections of the Protestant churches, which, through a long season of ease and security, have become indifferent, if not opposed to many things which in the early periods of the Reformation were deemed of vital importance, in order to withstand the man of sin, without alarm for their safety. It is evident, that the battle of the Reformation must be again fought over in this country ; and the issue cannot be otherwise than disastrous to the reformation cause, unless its friends, in the very onset, assume the whole armor of God, many parts of which they have thrown away as the rubbish of other times. It is with pleasure, we learn, that these letters are to be issued in a book form. They should be read by every American.